Eightfold evangelism

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Japan Assemblies of God Mission
Missionary sent to the Philippines
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Why did I decide to write this text?

The world has become convenient in many ways. But that doesn't mean that people's brains have improved accordingly. Just because I have switched from manuscript paper to a word processor for what I'm up against now, it doesn't mean that sentences just pop into my head. A novice boy in front of the person he longs to meet is unable to convey even a fragment of his daily frustration, because he is staring back into the beautiful eyes of the person he longs to meet. After much conflict and struggle, he finally says a few words. Suddenly, the words seem terribly stupid and unkind, and he stammers. That night, he pulled the duvet over his head and bit his own head off in misery.

I, too, have been thinking of giving up and throwing it away after only typing the first sentence, although I have tried with great enthusiasm to express my daily frustrations. But there is something I really want to say. I have been careful not to go too far out on a limb, but if I don't say what I want to say for too long, I get frustrated. Complaints are as nasty as dog faeces you've stepped in, or a boils at the back of your nose.

But I am an evangelist, so I know how to keep a few complaints to myself and smile at them. I rarely give the congregation the scent of it. Instead, because of his inadequacies, he is always hitting his wife. Like the people of old, he cannot "dig a hole and say, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry'", nor can he perform spiritual feats such as "I confide every lump in my chest only to the Lord". Man wants to confide in man. He wants man to sympathise with him. That is how he was created. However, nowadays, it is not possible to solve this problem by lashing out at one's wife. Even if I remind myself that it is extremely annoying and naive to complain to other people, it will not stop me. The frustration in my heart swelled up like the belly of a lazy grass pufferfish caught on a breakwater in the sun, and I couldn't contain it any longer. I desperately needed to vent.

I am disappointed with the state of the Church in Japan. I am also disillusioned with the church in the Philippines, where I have lived for more than 10 years. I am angry at myself for having worked there as a missionary. Our churches lack strength. It is not growing as it should. My own life as a missionary for nearly 20 years is a museum of many failures. The setbacks, like the eggs of a toad in a transparent jelly string, are a magnificent series of them, and they highlight my ministry.

My heart aches for the church, which is growing at a sluggish pace. But it is not that I have lost love. I am discouraged by my inability to do proper evangelism. But I have not lost hope at all. I am a bit of a prude, but I love the church. I have always thought that I would die for it. I love my failures. So I decided to write down my failures and the many things they made me think about and taught me, so that young Christians who want to evangelise can use them as a "rock from which to fall" and a "rock from which to build". In this way, my miserable failures would become a treasure for the church. If my younger colleagues did not repeat my mistakes, the church might become stronger. If that is the case, venting frustration will not be all that harmful.

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I hate training. I dislike both doing and being done. I am a lazy person who gets a shiver down my spine just by thinking about hard sports training, military training and so on. Despite this, I have been through some pretty tough training grounds. This is because I have been taught by 'people who speak through the Bible' that I am a useless, useless person just as I am. They have been led to believe that if they want to do God's work, they need to train themselves to death.

'I am as good as anything they make me do' - this is me. If I were to make a bell-shaped graph, I would definitely be in the middle of that heap of people everywhere, usually in the third to fifth or sixth place. So if I was number two, I felt like boasting a lot. When I was still a Bible school student, I once got first in an exam. It was only a class of 16 students, and I scored a lousy 74, and it was only by accident because the other students had somehow cut corners a bit, but it is something I will never forget, something I can't ・・・・ help but publicise, even though I secretly ・・・・ I am proud of it.

A person of this level cannot become great, no matter how you plant it and look at it. Even when he opens the books of the Reformers, who are "all about theology", he is more drowsy than understanding. When he hears of the cleansing experiences of those who follow the Holiness tradition, he immediately becomes frightened, and when he enters the fervent prayers of the Holy Spirit School, he shrinks back and goes to the corner, where he can barely do more than pray softly. When I read the testimonies of wonderful and admirable Christians, I feel miserable before I am blessed, and I can't help but feel sorry for myself. I am blessed to have become an evangelist, even though I am not even a "conventional" evangelist.

Even I have the joy of being saved by grace. I want to evangelise. I think seriously about building a church. My desire was so great that I even became a missionary. So, once again I was inspired and read all kinds of books about evangelism, pastoral care and missions. Fortunately, they are usually easier to read than 'theology books'. But what do you think? I was surprised when I read them. These easy books are also written by master pastors, master evangelists, super missionaries and philosophers. Each of them is a man of great ability and has done a remarkable and admirable job. It would be extremely difficult for me, an "average" person, to do what they say. If I were to do it badly, I might fall over and get seriously injured. Is evangelism such a high art? Is pastoral care such a sacred work? Is it something that can only be done by those who have been specially called and specially trained?

At least not from what I have read in the Bible. Evangelism is as easy as buying a radish at the greengrocer's in town, and pastoral care is not a special work. The problem with our churches today is that we have made evangelism and pastoral care into very difficult and special work. Therefore, unless you have 'tremendous' abilities, you can't do great work. But my desire is not to train people of ordinary ability, training upon training, so that they can do this difficult work. That is impossible for me, because I have failed even in my own training. Rather, it is to find and remove the various factors that make evangelism, pastoral care and mission even more difficult. It is to enable ordinary people to do more than ordinary work without being ordinary. To avoid misunderstanding, I am not saying that training is unnecessary. I am simply saying that evangelism can be done without training.

The church is not a group of competent and clever people. The Church has been given the mission of evangelisation, the Great Commission of world missions. It has been given to the whole Church, not to a few Christians who are absolutely full of ability, overflowing like the sweet juice of a tangerine melon, but to the whole Church, which is full of all these things,

including the bitterest, the most careless, the most careless, the most stubborn, and the most capable. Evangelism, then, should not be difficult.

I graduated from a Bible school in Tokyo. Not of Amerikkyo. It was a school for Japanese people to train Japanese people for evangelism. After graduation, I was sent to a small pioneer mission in downtown Tokyo. Despite a fairly long history, there were only four members. Two of them are married couples. The average attendance at worship meetings was less than six, including myself, and after two months, one of the members moved out. 2-storey wooden building, a factory-cum-apartment, in a corner of which an L-shaped room of 6 and 3 square metres were used as a worship hall, dining room, bedroom and study room, and we still did a lot of work. We put up signs. Flyers were spread. Tracts were distributed. We held special evangelistic meetings. We did roadside evangelism. Repeated visits. I blew the trumpet, beat the drums and played the organ. Of course, I prepared my sermons thoroughly. I wrote it down word for word and also pulled the red, blue and green lines. The red line raised his voice, the blue line reached out his hand and the green line tapped the desk. I don't remember what the yellow line was. Anyway, it was like this, and for two years I fought malnutrition and kept my devotion and willpower up until I was suddenly sent as a 'missionary' to Okinawa, which was still under US administration. The average attendance at worship meetings was around 13.

My trial and error began during this period. I am very sorry to the teachers who patiently trained a young monk like me, who was neither chopsticks nor sticks, but the first thing I realised at that time was that what I had spent three years learning in Bible school was of little use at all. I was a young boy. In my youthful hubris, I believed that I could preach better than others, and as I have already said, I put a lot of effort into my sermons. On one occasion, I attempted a series of five 'epic theological sermons', starting with Romans 1:1. Finally, after 40 minutes past the service time, a girl came. For the next hour, I preached a masterful sermon that I had prayed and prayed over. This lovely girl, who had graduated from junior high school, had come from the countryside to work in a small town factory with the help of her relatives, and whose intelligence quotient was probably less than 80, would never understand my sermon. I knew that well enough, but I had prayed and prepared a great sermon. I couldn't just stop her. But for the past hour, I had been overcome by a feeling of helplessness, as if I

were trying to eat udon noodles with a spoon. I fell into a distrust of preaching. I still haven't come out of it.

Many of today's Bible schools originated from the 'Bible school movement' initiated by Mooday, Torrey and others. They tried to do something about the fact that seminary education had become too advanced, too specialised and too knowledge-driven to meet the needs of the general public. However, it is heard that the Bible schools are also beginning to drift away from the general public. Many Bible schools in Japan and other countries that have become mission fields for American evangelicalism have a similar tendency.

However, a more serious problem is that the majority of these Bible schools are still mere imitations of American Bible schools and do not provide education according to the culture, national conditions and real needs of each country. In the USA, more than 60% of the population belongs to some church, more than 45% attend church regularly and 35% have a so-called 'Born Again' experience. In such a situation, it is important to produce pastors who excel in pastoral care. As long as the pastoral care is well done, sheep from the neighbouring 'dead pasture' will come over the fence in droves to greener pastures. Pastors of churches that are said to be growing are all 'good pastors'. Churches are full of neighbouring sheep that have climbed over the fence. Bible school curricula are designed around pastoral training.

But what about Japan? What about other mission fields? It is not unusual for the Christian population to be at most a few per cent of the population, if not as small as in Japan. There are no sheep to pastor. Even if Spurgeon produces a brilliant sermon that makes people jealous, there is no one to listen to it. What needs to be taught in Bible schools in mission fields is not to produce good sermons that no one will listen to, but to produce people who will listen to even bad sermons. The curriculum must be changed from a pastoral to an evangelistic one. Because this is the current state of Bible schools, those who graduate from them can preach but cannot evangelise. There are many pastors like me who are repeating trial and error. Those who keep repeating trial and error are 'drowning people'. The drowning man clutches at straws. They try every medicine they see and hear, whether Western or Chinese, saying that if they put this on, it will stop falling out, or if they apply that, it will grow back, while thinking about Aderans and eavesdropping on hair transplant surgery advertisements. When we read that positive thinking seems to be good, we actively try to become its followers too. That is why the prosperity gospel is also very prosperous. When we see a growing church in the east, we visit it; when we see a successful pastor in the west, we ask him to teach us. But sadly. Many pastors are not so different from me, they are ordinary people. Imitating the best

can be a recipe for disaster.

I have been trying for nearly 20 years. However, because I was somewhat competitive, I have never scrambled to the east or west in search of a teacher. Sometimes there was no respectable person nearby. There was no money to go far away. I took a lick of church growth theory, positive thinking and the prosperity gospel, but they didn't suit my taste buds. It didn't taste like the Bible I was familiar with. I couldn't stand the modern American religious philosophies of pragmatism, idealism and materialism, each smelling like cheap butter. I must say, however, that the Church Growth Theory helped me a little, in a counter-intuitive way, and I cannot escape the charge of unfairness.

It is the result of my own trial-and-error and wanderings that I can now say that evangelism is essentially an easy thing to do. I have become acutely aware of how the traditional forms and activities of the church, which were instilled in me through church education and Bible school education, have forgotten the masses and are disconnected from reality. So, I tried to learn if Christianity was really like that from the beginning. I also began to investigate what the Bible teaches about the church and what forms and activities it presents. In doing so, he was surprised. There is almost nothing in Protestantism that can be called ecclesiology. When I finally found one, it was a 'Reformed ecclesiology' or a 'Baptist ecclesiology', not an ecclesiology as biblical theology, that is, an ecclesiology that the Bible teaches. In the end, I had no choice but to read the Bible myself and have a more biblical ecclesiology. Sadly, however, I am a roving missionary with not a smidgen of theological training. I am a blind, blind, blind, blind, haphazard man. With Bible in hand, I read every book I could get my hands on on church matters, and eventually I was able to rain questions down on scholars who I thought were the best, until I finally came across a Greek-related book that had been sitting in a dusty corner of a bookshelf, and was politely asking me to revise it. Looking back, this hardship was a good thing. If I had known anything about theology, I would have understood it easily and forgotten about it comfortably.

Therefore, my theory of evangelism, pastoralism and mission is not mere pragmatism, an efficiency theory based on a collection of experiences that went well and succeeded. It is a practical theology derived from biblical theology and ecclesiology," he says. Because people are small, they cannot be intimidated unless they can take the high ground. But it is also a theology backed by the experience of the failures of ordinary evangelists, who have worked hard to do work that they can compete with, while trying to avoid being crushed by towering spiritual and academic giants.

A hunter was walking along the seaside. People who ask why he is a hunter and not a fisherman are not being honest, and I am a cynical person who cares about such things, but ・・・・. Anyway, I did. A lone
monkey was drowning in the shallows. It must have been a very bad monkey. The hunter snatched the monkey without difficulty. If that's all there was to it, that's all there was to it, and nothing more. But the hunter came to the beach the next day. The day after that, he came again. Then they came every day. Today, if you happen to be walking along the coast of a small island in the south, look quietly under the coconut trees. You will find a grey-haired, shriveled old man with a cane on his cheek, staring out to sea. He used to be the best hunter on the island.

When his wife hears this story, the first thing she says when she opens the door is, "That doesn't sound very exciting". It is my own creation to teach the cooperating evangelists in the Philippines. To be honest, I plagiarised it.

When I was in the sixth grade, I was asked to do a one-man play called 'Machiboke' for the school arts competition. It was not because I was a good performer. It was a desperate measure to satisfy the urgent need of a school of 26 students deep in the mountains of Hokkaido, where there was no electricity and the children were starving for entertainment, and to satisfy their father, mother, father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, and even the snivelling, snivelling brats who smelled of piss. Because of this, I was forced to sing in public, against my dead mother's advice.

Waiting and waiting and waiting
One day, I was working hard, earning a living as a stray.
Then a rabbit jumped out.
It rolled over, and fell down a tree.

Waiting, waiting, waiting
Oh, no, now I'm going to sleep and wait.
Wait, and the prey will come running.

Rabbit, bump into you, tree roots.

Waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting.
Yesterday, hoeing, working in the fields.
Today, hoeing, hinataboko, hinataboko.
The good hoeing, the good stumps, the tree's roots

Waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting.
Today we wait, today we wait, today we wait, today we wait, today we wait, today we wait, today we wait.
Tomorrow, tomorrow, out in the forest.
Waiting for the rabbits, waiting for the rabbits, tree nests.

Waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting.
Once a cool, green field
Now it's a wilderness of broomsticks.
The cold north wind, the tree cribs.

This is the story of plagiarism. However, the accuracy of the lyrics cannot be guaranteed, as they were written 30 years ago. The song was written 30 years ago, so there is no guarantee that the lyrics are accurate.

There are proverbs similar to this, such as 'tanakara kara bota mochi', 'anko no kawaregare', 'wette te millet' and 'kaho wa neri ni waite', as well as a play called 'sannen netsutaro' (three-year bedtime story). There is also a play called '3 years sleep taro', which is similar to this, and 'no bad money will come to you', which is closer to this. Anyway, this is the kind of evangelism I have been doing. This is the kind of evangelism I learnt at Bible school, and the kind of evangelism that I took great pains to steal from the traditional churches.

According to a survey by NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) some years ago, 36% of Japanese people think that if they had to choose a religion, it would be Christianity. Monkeys swarm in the mountains. Rabbits are hopping around in the fields. Today's churches, however, are peasants in the "townships". It is an old man under a coconut tree on a small island in the south.

Now, I have sworn a lot, but I have included myself in the swearing from the beginning so that

no one will say, "Well, what about you? In short, this is a thoroughly bitter self-criticism. And it is a criticism of the Church that places itself within the Church because it is a member and a poster child of this very contemporary Church.

However, for those who are reading this foolish article, it is as if they have been "taken out of the bush". When you hear the church that you love and serve being vilified, you must be feeling annoyed and perplexed, as if you were suddenly hit over the head with three or four blows by a scoundrel who had suddenly appeared out of nowhere. In fact, I, the scoundrel, am angry. I am angry at my own inadequacy, and I am lashing out everywhere. I am angry at the church, which makes up its own unworthy self and allows its unworthy self to say, "Well, you're doing pretty well...", and I am angry and angry. Anyone who passes by wants to beat them up. I want you to give up on this as some kind of 'karma'. I beg you to be small.

I don't want you to be upset that I used a Buddhist term twice in such a short sentence. If you say that, I won't be able to say thank you. By the way, there was a preacher who repeatedly said, "Sleeve-wearing is another life's karma". Or did he understand it as "some fate"? But still, it is strange.

The theory section - but evangelistic propaganda

Before I knew it, this was a long-winded preface. Let's get to the main point. When I say the main point, I mean the detour, the wayward path, where two drinks that were meant to be one overlap, and you find yourself hugging a telegraph pole and apologising, 'Officer. You will be praised for your honesty, at least if you refuse from the outset that you are no better than the wobbly legs of an old man apologising to an officer. Let's call this staggered-footed evangelism 'but evangelism'.

But evangelism

If ten years is one decade, then it was about three years ago that there was a big problem with 'performance reviews' of primary and junior high school teachers. The teachers, who had been tormenting their pupils with examinations and mercilessly grading and intimidating them with their "report cards", the most cowardly of the family treasures, were now being evaluated, and their fellow underdogs were very much disheartened to hear that they would

now be on the receiving end of the evaluations.

By the way, our organisation also has a work evaluation system. It is not a particular evaluation, but rather a monthly reporting requirement for organisations to know the actual situation of each church and pastor, and if interpreted in good faith, it is an expression of parental love to know the actual situation so that better action and guidance can be taken. However, for the inferiority-stricken 'clingy evangelists', this is an object of disgust, even more so than the resentful report cards.

The most important part of the denomination's work evaluation is the number of attendances at Sunday service meetings. My fellow workers, who "wish to be remembered" in any way, are so suspicious of children and babies, not to mention the little heads of kittens that wander in, that they are inclined to think that they might be counted as ・・・・・. No, this is probably my own delusion, having spent too much time with evangelists across the sea who count and report on the ears, not the heads, of those in attendance, and who cannot collect donations without counting and promoting the fingers of those who make up their mind to do so.

Anyway, the modern church is betting on Sunday worship meetings. Someone, for example, has said that Christ and the Father are one. Christ and the Holy Spirit are one. It would not matter much if someone said that Christ is the Father and Christ is the Holy Spirit. It must be quite acceptable to say that God, being love, will ultimately save all mankind. There is a lot of propaganda in newspapers and magazines advocating evangelicalism from people claiming such things. But what would happen if I told my congregation that if I built a church that did not hold Sunday worship meetings, they would not have to attend Sunday worship meetings? The modern church would hunt me down with all the zeal that the medieval church showed in its witch hunts. I hear that some of my fellow workers have already been on a modern witch hunt ・・・・.

The activities of the modern church are Sunday-centred, and it does not do satisfactory work outside of Sundays. I say, "That is not true. Our church is actively working seven days a week". No, we want them to be there. I want them to be there as much as possible. And if that were the case, I would be very happy to apologise to them for the sin of overgeneralisation, that is, of being too hasty in making generalisations. Don't misunderstand me. I am talking about the activities of the church, not the work of the pastor. I know many pastors who are busy working 365 days a year. So it is not uncommon for pastors to quickly become old, frayed and worn

out, like the rags that used to wipe the rough-grained corridors of a primary school with water every day.

I don't want to get into the most plausible theological argument that the pastor is a member of the church and therefore his ministry is the ministry of the church, because that's not the point. The point is not there. The average Japanese church on Sunday is beyond busy, it has become a busy place. It is harder than sorting out the loach, the catfish, the eel and the eight-eyed eel in a vat. On the other hand, churches are closed from Monday to Saturday. This makes it impossible for the general public to hear the gospel except on Sundays.

In addition, many churches these days do not hold evening evangelistic meetings. It is said that people cannot gather. Therefore, in order for modern Japanese to hear the gospel, they have to be able to find time on Sundays from around 10am until after midnight, i.e. when ordinary churches are holding their service meetings. I don't know how many people today, living in this complex and diversified society, in an age where people are dominated by time, can make time to go to church on Sunday mornings, let alone in an age when everyone had a simple social life, when people dominated time even in the midst of hard work. If it is a matter of life or death, or if they have a passing interest in Christianity, or if they are thinking about becoming a Christian when they have some free time, in other words, if they are in the best position to become a Christian, it is unlikely that they will make the time to go to church. It is unlikely that they would make the time to come to church. Therefore, we tend to cut corners when we share the gospel with people who don't have time on Sundays, whether it's a special evangelism or visitation evangelism. We went fishing for small horse mackerels and came across a big school of Chinook. There was nothing to do but give up.

The modern church is twisted Sabbatarian. 'Those who cannot come to church on Sunday are sinners who deserve to perish. There can be no salvation for them. Because they do not want to come to church and hear the gospel on the day and time set by the church. 'O God! Send these sinners to hell who refuse to come, knowing that this church has stood here for 30 years. 'Police officers, fire station workers, train drivers, department store sellers, shopkeepers, all those who work on Sundays. And punish the businessmen who go out to play golf without a shred of pity," he preaches loudly every Sunday and Sunday. If loud is wrong, at least preach with deeds that are more powerful than words. The church has no doubt that the church is not responsible for the souls of those who are not saved because they cannot come to church on the Sunday leap day.

However, miracles do happen. People who have to work on a normal Sunday can somehow come to church on a special Sunday, for example, and be saved. And this is where the tragedy begins. He has to live with the fact that he is looked at as a B-Christian who cannot keep up his attendance on Sundays. And then another miracle happens: he changes his profession to become an A-Class Christian, with a reduced income. I have seen this inspiring miracle several times. I think it is a great victory of faith. But this is a miracle. It doesn't happen often and we don't want it to happen that often.

We were brought up with a strict adherence to the Holy Days. I was saved in my first year of high school and have only missed Sunday services twice in my nearly 25 years of Christian life. Once was two days after an appendectomy, and the pastor, knowing how stubborn I was about attending the service, quietly hid my kimono. I could not attend the service in pyjamas. The second time was when I was sent on a pioneering mission to Okinawa. After running into a Taiwanese monk, our ship was tossed about a lot and we turned back around Amami Oshima Island and spent the night in Kagoshima Bay. On Sunday morning, surrounded by people who were still saying "Oe, oe" and the loud, unfamiliar sound of Ryukyuan music, I was not in the mood to sing hymns by myself. That is why, even in high school, I did not attend any school events held on Sundays. I did not even attend my own graduation ceremony. My diploma and red-and-white manjuu (red and white buns) were later delivered to me by a friend. I was content with being an A-level Christian. The man who gave up his position as a national railway employee of 30 years to attend Sunday services was ... (I'm sorry I can't say brother. He was my hero afterwards, who gave up his faith with the same grace ・・・・ ... once and for all ・・・・).

By the way, I do not know when or how Sunday came to be called a holy day. Or it may have come from the Old Testament, since the New Testament does not attach importance to any particular day. If so, it seems to have come from a place where the Sabbath was to be kept holy. If so, it seems that the Church, which calls Sunday a holy day, considers Sunday to be the Sabbath. If the Old Testament Sabbath rule must be applied as it is today in the New Testament era, then various problems arise, both in theology and in practical life.

Did not Christ fight against legalistic Sabbath observance and risk His life for it? Was not the Sabbath Saturday? Is the Church not doing activities that should not have been done on the Sabbath? How do we interpret Paul's teaching on specific days and Sabbaths, clearly stated in Romans 14:5 and 6 or Colossians 2:16?

Judas and the people were, I think, called 'nantokas' (I forget the Hebrew name!). They had special servants. They were to do work that was forbidden to them on the Sabbath. Even modern Israelites are not allowed to open the refrigerator door or replace a broken light bulb on the Sabbath. If they have to, they have to ask a non-Jew to do it. However, strictly speaking, they are not allowed to ask. It is not allowed to climb stairs or press the lift button, they say. This is ridiculous if we try to impose a strictly legalistic interpretation of the Sabbath, based on a simple life, on this modern, increasingly complex world.

There are no examples of the Church considering Sunday to be the Sabbath to be taken up, except for a few at the end of the third century and a few among the strict Puritans. The expression 'Christian Sabbath' was not mentioned by the Catholics until the 20th century, when the Greek Orthodox Church was influenced by it. As we know, one of the peculiarities is the Seventh-day Church.

However, if the term 'holy day' comes from the idea of consecrating the day as a day of special activities dedicated to God by selecting it for functional convenience, just as one selects a plate to feed a cat from among many plates and separates it, ... this is wrong. This is not sanctification but secularisation. Instead, it is better to select one out of many cups and separate it for the king's use only. ・・・・ I understand the purpose and the reason for this.

Then it doesn't have to be on a Sunday. It can be Friday or Tuesday. Any day that is convenient for people is best. The spirit of the Sabbath is ・・・・・ that, according to Christ, there is no man for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man. The most convenient day for people today, living in this complex and diverse society, is every day. If the modern church is to use the worship meeting as a place of evangelisation, it should hold a worship meeting at least every day, preferably twice a day. If the number of people who attend only one service a week is 100, then if they hold seven services a week, the number of people who attend seven services a week would be 700.

When and how did the current tradition of Sunday morning worship begin? I value tradition. It is the wisdom of many people, born from the experience of many people over the course of history, and is not a hasty conclusion based on the half-baked ideas of a single person. On the other hand, traditions that are left behind by the times and the environment are nothing more than a mere skeleton. And moreover, tradition is not the word of God. It may have been an interpretation of God's word in a certain age, an application of God's word in a certain

situation, but it is not God's word. However, it has often been the case, even before the time of Christ, that the importance of tradition has reduced the Word of God to nothing. Apparently, people are traditionally susceptible to tradition. There is no teaching in the Bible that we must have Sunday morning worship meetings, nor is there any mention that Sunday morning worship meetings were indeed held. What there certainly is is tradition. The Day of the Lord just comes up once. (Mk 1:10) This is where the term 'Lord's Day worship meeting' was born. This was called to commemorate the day of the Lord's resurrection, which was, of course, Sunday. Nevertheless, it was much later that such a designation took hold, apparently generalised by 'Didache' and Ignatius.

Another expression, only twice, is that of the first day of the week. And so, apparently, on this day, the first, or at least the Christians of Troas, had some kind of meeting. (Acts 20:7) The church in Corinth may also have had a meeting (I Cor 16:2) So, knowing the leap of logic, when we say that it was the custom of the early church to hold worship meetings on Sunday, there is no guarantee that it was on Sunday morning. Rather, it is clear that it could not have been on a Sunday morning. Sunday was a busy business day after the Sabbath, and tens of thousands of Christians taking the morning off work on such a day would surely have caused social disruption. Christianity was an unofficial religion. Those who espoused it would have wanted things to go as peacefully as possible. They could have been punished for sedition if they were not careful.

So when did they get together on Sunday? In the evening, of course. When there was no work to be done. By the way, did you know that according to the Jewish calendar of the time, Sunday evening was what we would now call Saturday evening, and not Sunday evening? In those days, the day began at sunset and ended at sunset. In other words, even if the very early Jerusalem church customarily held Sunday worship meetings, they must have been on Saturday in modern terms. It is quite conceivable that the Saturday night meetings were so prolonged that some stayed on, and that the next morning, that is, early on the morning of the day on which the Lord was raised, they held a service of rejoicing in His resurrection before going to work. A little later, in Troas, if Luke wrote Acts using Roman time, it would have been on a Sunday night.

In the infancy of Christianity, the Christians in Jerusalem were all faithful Jews, attending the synagogue together on the Sabbath, i.e. Saturday, participating in its activities and fulfilling their obligations as Jews. They did not stop being faithful Jews or change their customs, even if it was because of their new faith in the carpenter of Nazareth as the Messiah.

That is why they were respected by all. (Acts 5:13) And because they were quite active in the synagogue on the Sabbath, which was just about as far as they were allowed to go on the Sabbath, any activity outside of the synagogue was impossible. Thus, Christians were not allowed to do any Christian activities on Saturdays, let alone worship meetings.

At that time, Christians met every day. (To be precise, except perhaps on the Sabbath), which must have been a mixture of study of the Old Testament and the teachings of the apostles, and fellowship meetings. Houses in Jerusalem that were used as synagogues would also have been used for Christian gatherings. Naturally, the activities and forms of the synagogues were taken as a model for the activities and forms of the churches. After a while, when things began to settle down, it became customary for the church to meet on the evening after the Sabbath, i.e. on Sunday evening, or Saturday evening as we know it today, which is a natural consequence and evidence that the church had the dynamic vitality to deal with the realities of the situation.

However, the evening meetings, whether on Sunday or Saturday, did not last long. This was because the Emperor Trajan (reigned AD.98-117) forbade unaccredited groups to hold evening meetings. Removing the Supper (which included Holy Communion) from the Church's assemblies of the time was as good as eliminating the intention of the assembly. This is thought to have led to the increased importance of early Sunday morning worship meetings, i.e. before sunrise, when ordinary workers and slaves could also attend. However, it was not until the end of the second century that it became widely known that Christ's resurrection was on a Sunday, and many Christians did not yet link Sunday worship meetings with the significance of the Lord's resurrection. It was not until 321 CE, when the Emperor Constantine made Sunday a holiday, that they were able to enjoy the Sunday morning service. Moreover, those who could not rest because of their work, including those engaged in agriculture, did not have to, and this was not because of Constantine's faith in Christ or for the sake of Christians, but rather because of the pagan mysticism of the 'day of the sun'.

Anyway, the Bible is silent on the current Sunday morning prayer meeting. Besides, the 10am or 10:30am thing came out of the pioneer American way of life, some 200 years ago. They had a lot of livestock on a large piece of land, which had to be fed and milked, even on Sundays. Ten o'clock or ten-thirty was just the right time to finish these tasks and attend a meeting for worship. There is no reason why we, who live in a complex and diverse society today, should not adhere to the old customs of those who lived this simple pastoral and agricultural life.

Many Christians are stubborn. In the USA, there are still some 'Amish', who still cling to the lifestyle of their pioneer immigrant homeland as a cancer. Their clothes, shoes, hats, headdresses, houses, furniture, horse-drawn carriages and farming implements are the same as in the past. They do not use cars, trains, radios, televisions or any other modern equipment. They believe that this is the correct attitude of faith. Are they unaware that their outdated way of life was actually a way of life that raised the eyebrows of conservative people in the past, a way of life that pandered to the times and was bizarre? But there is something romantic about that way of life. ・・・・・

The pioneer Amerindians were full of vitality, like the first Christians who brought their gatherings to the day after the Sabbath. So they brought their gatherings at a time that suited their new lifestyle. However, the Anglicans (Church of England), who were stubborn, or rather conservative, and valued tradition, did not change their ways in England. The time of the service was usually around seven o'clock. Not surprisingly, the most powerful church at the time lost the opportunity to grow in Americal power and was left behind.

Even if the New Testament taught that Sunday was the Sabbath in New Testament times (which it does not), I am not so sure that Sunday today is definitely Sunday before God. However, even with leap years, time cannot be perfectly regulated, and long periods of time can cause deviations. That's why the ・・・・・ calendar is supposed to have been adjusted twice in history, I think it may have been ・・・・・ once. So unless we are sure that God has approved that calendar adjustment, Sunday now is not Sunday before God.

It is fine to have a worship meeting on Sunday. It is fine to call it a Sunday worship service. Calling it a holy day is not an eye-opener. But that does not mean that Sunday should be equated with the Sabbath. It is wrong not to have worship meetings on days other than Sunday. It is even worse if the gospel is not preached on any other day than Sunday.

But as soon as I say this, people immediately reply, "People don't come together except on Sundays". Indeed, people today don't gather. So the church wants to gather at least on Sundays, or the pastor wants his sermons to be heard by as many people as possible, or the pastor wants to get as many people as possible on his report card, to improve his work evaluation and, if

possible, to be considered the best among his Bible school classmates. I want to be considered the best of my Bible school classmates. What the heck, he'll go the extra mile and threaten the congregation in the hope of being featured in a church growth magazine. 'Sunday is the Holy Day. Sunday is the Lord's day. It is the Sabbath. It is a sin to take it lightly. It is a sin not to attend worship meetings." No, no, in truth, there are no such bad pastors. They all want the growth and happiness of their congregation. It is the same dialectic as saying, "If you tell a lie, Yama will pull out your tongue" or "If you eat and sleep right away, you will become a cow".

In the orthodox power trick, it is an unforgivable sin to miss Sunday Mass. This is because they cannot partake of the sacraments that are administered there. According to them, wine and bread are sacrifices offered repeatedly for the forgiveness of sins, and not to partake of them is not to partake of forgiveness. This is why Catholics in general attend Mass with trepidation. After all, if they miss this week's Mass, their sins from the previous week remain unforgiven, and it would be a disaster if they were to meet with an accident and die. I don't know about Catholics in Japan, but at least that is what the masses in the Philippines, the only Catholic country in Asia, believe. Therefore, on Saturday nights, when early morning mass will soon be celebrated, they drink, dance, play gayambul and buy women. After mass, everyone is forgiven and can die at any time.

If all we want to do is to gather people on Sunday morning, then we should adopt Catholic teaching. If that's not good enough, we should stop making threats that don't work very well. And it must be in our interest to think of other ways.

The reason we can't get people together is because we try to get everyone at once, or if that's not possible, at least as many as possible. To repeat the same words, modern people, who live in "this complex and diversified society", are a pitiful race of people who are manipulated by time. So the only time all 72 members of the congregation get together is when the pastor dies. No, even then it is doubtful. Then, in a normal event, no matter how hard you try, at most 50 or at best 55 people will be there. But on the other hand, because of the way modern society works, two or three people can get together at any time, even at midnight; five people can get together any time during the day, seven people can get together every night. In short, as long as the pastor is happy with a small group, there is no problem at all.

Worse, the pastor is trained to preach. Preaching is a fussy business with ten or so people, and with two or three people, it's a back-breaking business. You have to have a lot of people to really get going. Even two or three people are important souls. If you can't preach, then tell a

story. If not a story, then a chat. If that doesn't work either, get a pastor's wife who likes to talk. If that doesn't work, have a member of the congregation do it. It is better that way. When it comes down to it, you can all chat, praise and pray together. In short, if you put the subject on the teachings of the Bible and God, that's good enough. Then what happens? A gathering of three may become five, and a fellowship of five may become ten. Then, inevitably, there will be more attendance at worship meetings.

'・・・・・・ I also woke up early ・・・・・. If I get up in the dim light, the whole family scolds me. My son, who is tired from working overtime in Tabae, is in a bad mood, and his daughter-in-law, whom he married over his parents' objections, has low blood pressure and is not a good sleeper. On top of that, his lovely grandchildren are also enemies on this matter. Even if you try to woo them with souvenirs, children these days won't even look at a few things. There are many elderly people who turn over 37 and a half times every morning with this in mind. So, two or three times a week, we should have a meeting for the elderly early in the morning. The young pastors should stay in bed. If he shows his face in a serious manner, the energetic Kan'ichi Omiya will create a scene from Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 2.

The housewives of "No Sundays" are actually a mixed lot: the young wives with children in kindergarten are tired of the afternoon TV programmes, while the ladies who have finished raising their children start to get bored at around 9:47 am. It would be good if the ladies of the church made a place for them to hear the gospel as well. The young pastor should stay back. 'If you get too bossy, soap operas could pop up on the TV.

If you do that, you lose your modesty. If we do that, there will be no discipline, we will lose our discipline and we won't be able to get together on Sundays. I, too, recognise the need for a certain degree of discipline. Especially for a person like me, who is a simpleton, a hoop is absolutely indispensable. But what is a hoop? ・・・・・Young people, do you know what a hoop is? ・・・・ It's written as 'hoop'. It was usually made of bamboo, hence the bamboo crown, and there is a classic rakugo story called 'gaga-yaaa'. It's a round ring that was used to hold the barrels ・・・・・ together so that they wouldn't fall apart. The hoops are used to force things that were not originally meant to be attached to each other to stay together.

But what is the church? What is a Christian? Like a magnet, like a freshly pounded rice cake, or like a candy ball that has melted, are they not originally things that stick to each other and never stop sticking together? Is it not something that has stuck together so well that the persecutors have tried every trick in the book to kick it out, but have all failed? When the

church, i.e. Christians, become ill and start to lose their true nature, they stop sticking together. The church is important, but the health of the church and the health of Christians is more important. Unfortunately, the Western church, poisoned by the gospel of individualism, has lost much of its original, sticking power.

But America is great. It has created the glue that replaces the church's original sticking together nature. That is entertainment. That is, doing lots of fun things that attract people. The greatness of America is many things, but it is outstanding in entertainment, and compared to this, Japan is a baby. Movies, theatre, music, television, sports, gambling, bars, department stores, theme parks, circuses and even elections are all fun and exciting.

American churches are devoted to entertainment. A good pastor is a good entertainer. The phrase "a fun guy who knows what he's talking about" has become a way of praising a pastor. So the worship service is a show. There is singing, talking and dancing. The lighting and sound are as good as in a first-class theatre. The chairs are comfortable and the floor is soft and cupped. No Jesus with muddy feet and sawdust on his head, please. There are beauty contests and fashion shows. Yankee-san seems to be satisfied unless everything is done thoroughly.

But the imitation of Japanese church entertainment is shabby and unacceptable. We have to recover the original nature of the church. We must realise this clearly. Even if 36% of the Japanese are willing to become Christians, or at least think it's not a bad idea, if the church only tries to preach the gospel on Sunday mornings, 10% of that 36% will not have the chance to be saved. Let's evangelise on days other than Sunday. Evangelise anytime.

Evangelise "everywhere".

Now, then, if the church is freed from Sundayism and starts working anytime, if it starts preaching the gospel at all hours, does that immediately guarantee evangelistic success? We should not expect a healthy octopus just because one of the four legs has grown back. You have to wait for the other legs to grow back. It takes a lot of time.

So let's talk about the other leg. It is location. The modern church is almost exclusively place-based evangelism first. When it comes to starting a pioneering mission, the first step is to find a suitable house. Usually when we talk about building a church, we are not talking about the

church as the body of Christ, as the Bible says, but about the church building. In ordinary Christian conversation, even if there is a church as the body of Christ, without a church building there is no church. A church is a building. A great church is, at the very least, a church building that cost hundreds of millions of dollars, not a community of believers who love, care and encourage each other.

In Reformed theology, which we are very familiar with, it is said that the church is the place where the gospel is spoken and the sacraments are administered. Calvin is said to have said: 'Wherever the gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered, there is a church. Do not be deceived. The two are not similar. They are as different as the eel and the snake, Yasushi Inoue and Hisashi Inoue, and Pachero and Parejo. The difference between pahero and parejo needs to be explained to the Japanese public.

The most popular car in the Philippines today is the Mitsubishi Pajero four-wheel drive car. I have always wanted a four-wheel drive car because of the nature of my work, and last year I finally got one, fulfilling a wish I had had for 10 years. The fact that my work has been considerably expanded thanks to it is irrelevant to the main point of this story. Anyway, this car is called a pajero, which is the Spanish way of reading it here. However, recently, for some reason, this practical car has been classified as a luxury car and has become incredibly expensive. A carpenter's chieftain couldn't afford it even if he 'put his ear to the ground' with his earnings for 30 years. It is more popular than a Mercedes Benz. Taking advantage of this, a car called the Parejo has recently gone on sale.

It looks exactly the same on the outside as the PARELLO. The letters 'PAREJO' on the body also have the same design as those on the PAJERO, and unless you are very careful, you cannot tell them apart. According to some sources, the engine and other important parts were scavenged from used Japanese trucks, and only the outside was made to look exactly like a Pajero. Of course, it was made very cheaply. The word 'parejo' means 'same' in Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines. Why should I buy an expensive parejo? Parejo is fine. It's parejo either way. It is such a brilliant paroday that I would love to teach it to the genius of language, Saiichi Marutani. It's a great example of the Filipino spirit.

Let us return to the story. Calvin may be theologically correct when he says: "Wherever the gospel is preached and liturgy is performed, there is a church". ・・・・ Of course, this is not strictly true..... But on the other hand, the Reformed theology that "the church is the place where the gospel is spoken and the sacraments are administered" is not acceptable. The

church is not a 'place', i.e. a place. Absolutely, no: it is not a church at 1-1-1, it is a church building, an office, a place of worship, a house of prayer, a pastor's residence, but it is not a church. And the church is, again, absolutely not "the object to which the gospel is spoken". It is "the one to whom the gospel is spoken." It is the ambassador and agent of Christ, entrusted with the gospel and sent into the world for that purpose, to speak the gospel. It is never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never the object of the gospel being spoken.

Christian magazines and newspapers these days are full of news and features on expensive and beautiful new synagogues, this and that. They say that beautiful new synagogues are the medicine for church growth, the good medicine, the miracle medicine, the secret medicine, the cure-all, the elixir. They convince people that the church is not growing because it is old, small and inconspicuous, and declare and denounce that it is lack of faith that prevents the building of new synagogues.

Therefore, anyone who has a word to say about the building of a synagogue is a person who has sold his soul to the devil, whether he is a member of the congregation or a member of the teaching profession. We must not listen to such people. Therefore, this sentence, which I have read up to this point with patience, should not be read any longer. It should be discarded. So, alas, this little sentence is also doomed to be lost.

Therefore, only those who have an ear for the devil are reading this part now. I hear that the devil's words are pleasant to the ear. I would like you to try and see if that is true.

I have asked dozens of pastors who have achieved the building of new congregations in the last ten years or so. 'How many members of your congregation were dead when the synagogue was built?' Don't be offended by the terrible quality. It was an important part of my learning. As a result, there was only one zero death. It seems that all the churches were forced to go to great lengths when they built their synagogues. The more they pushed themselves, the higher the death rate. The deaths invariably include members of the board-level congregation who were loyal to the church. They were crushed by the sheer burden.

Is a churchyard so important? Is it so important that it is worth the lives of the congregation? Is it so irreplaceable that it could be thrown into the sea with a millstone around its neck, tripping over the little sheep entrusted to it?

'Yes', say the cold-hearted efficiencyist, raw-boiled church-growth theorists. 'Even if some

of them die, as long as there is a fine congregation built up, the church will grow. Then it will pay for itself. This is 'a grain of wheat that falls to the ground and does not die'.

But my Jesus is different. My Jesus is the one who removes the stained-glass windows of a fine synagogue and sells them to a thrift shop to feed and clothe the poor. As I write this, I am reminded of the lives of the people I visit and serve in the remote mountains of the Philippines. The image of malnourished, naked children shivering in the cold comes to mind. (At 2000 metres above sea level, it is very cold, even in the tropical Philippines.) Children died one after another from rubella, and children died overnight from unexplained diarrhoea. In my photo album, they are smiling, but as long as I live in this world, I will never see their smiles again.

Modern churches put a lot of effort into their buildings. And within the building, most of the activities are completed. The gospel, as already mentioned, is spoken only in the events that take place in the building, in the worship meetings. Even if the modern Japanese want to hear the Bible, they have to go into the 'creepy building' of the church hall on Sundays, even if they don't have the time. This is not an easy task.

Testimony of those who have gone back and forth along the front path many, many times before setting foot in the synagogue. The stories of those who have barely made it across the "threshold". We must not laugh at them. This is how it is even for those who have a liking for the church. And even those who are not interested. I don't need to tell you about those who are antagonistic. A lion does not easily approach a body of water where a crocodile might be lurking. Crocodiles do not sunbathe in fields where lions roam. Boxers do not fight wrestlers under wrestling rules. Wrestlers also do not fight boxers under boxing rules. Each knows where he is strong. They also know where they are weak. The children of this world also know where they are strong and where they are weak. They don't go out of their way to make a match that is not a match. Anyone who comes to a place where he can't even do a little quality time because of a one-sided sermon is a summer bug that flies into the fire. It is more interesting to force Christians who can't drink to come and tease them about their troubles.

Church buildings are rarely conveniently located nearby. It is common for people to take about

an hour to get to a church, even though not many people have to change trains twice or take three buses to get there. No matter how far away it is, it is impossible for the most ordinary unbelievers, no matter if it is a congregation that has been tamed and threatened that it is a sin not to attend a worship meeting, ・・・・・ or if it is a congregation that feels the significance of their devotion in making the sacrifice to attend from a distance. So, congregations at a distance are not able to evangelise their neighbours. For ordinary believers, evangelism means inviting them to church, that is, to the Sunday service meeting in the church hall, not to tell them the gospel and lead them to salvation themselves. ・・・・・ That is the pastor's job. The work of the pastor, who is paid to work, should not be taken away from him, because ・・・・・・ if the church hall is too far away, it is not evangelistic.

As you see, ・・・・・・ when I returned to Japan this summer, I was watching a live broadcast of the Diet proceedings on TV to catch up with the times, and I noticed that the leading members of the Diet kept using the phrase "as you see". I was unfamiliar with the term, so I immediately consulted a dictionary and found that it means something like "as you know", which is a term I have learnt since I was over 40 years old. The other day, I was reading something written by a Japanese language expert, who pointed out that such words should not be used. I don't think so. I've gone to the trouble of learning it, but it's too bad, isn't it? Let me use it just once. I won't use it again. ・・・・・・ Another thing that this parliament has taught me is that parliament must be pronounced Black Sea. Derailment.

So, as you can see, the location of the synagogue is of life-or-death importance for the modern church. At all costs, it should be built in the city centre, or at least on a main street. We want it to be as prominent as possible and to have good transport links. Luckily... I heard that Christians say "by God's will" in such cases. ・・・・ I hate "God's will" and "God's heart", so I beg your forgiveness. When I was young, a woman who reminded me of a dead fish, who was always mean to a sister whom I secretly admired, said to me: 'Brother. I seriously disliked 'Mimune' after she said to me, 'It is Mimune that you and I are to be married'. My Bible teaches me not to speak the name of God. The 'Mi' in 'MiMomento' or 'MiMomento' must refer to God.

Let's recover from the derailment. ・・・・ If you are lucky enough to find land in the best location, the next time you find land in the best location, the payment will be
It is very expensive. Land in Japan is expensive. I recently heard that for the price of all the land in Japan, you can buy four and a half lots in all 50 states of the USA! ・・・・・・ Also, you can repair the de-repair and visit ・・・・・. Well, anyway, the average church in modern

Japan does not have enough money to buy such land. If they force themselves, there will be more deaths. So, they put up with second- or third-class land, as befits their status.

Let's think about this for a moment. Distance to a church is not always just geographical distance. There is also temporal distance and economic distance. Well, these two are rather related to geographical distance, but there is also psychological or social distance. Each human being has his or her own sphere of activity, or sphere of action. Basically, we may be no different from a dog who walks around peeing on a walk. When I was a child, the other side of the main road, or the other side of a bridge, was a strange and unfamiliar little foreign country. As an adult it is the same. When a churchyard is located in a quiet, upmarket residential area, the artisans who work in the ironworks, the farmer's wife, the kind of people who have to get their fingernails dirty to do their job, can't come easily. Young wives who attend culture school or people who are thinking of planting their third five-leaf pine tree in the garden rarely want to visit the churchyard, which is located on a street corner between a small factory soaked in machine oil and a row of cheap flats.

In this light, it is better to build a church in a place that is as public and common as possible, but this is not always possible. As a result, no matter where they are built, it would be "good enough" if they could evangelise at most one tenth of the population, contrary to the prayer, "God, save 327,000 souls in this city". The only people who can really be the target of evangelism are those who are comfortable with the local environment in which the congregation is located, and who are not unreasonable in terms of time, economy or geography.

In the provincial city of 60,000 inhabitants where I lived at the time, there were a total of four church buildings. The most elegant and largest was the Catholic church building, but to me, who grew up in the countryside, the whole place had a dingy atmosphere and seemed to me as if it were inhabited by Western monsters. So I visited the smallest, shabbiest church, which was held in a rented old house that looked as if it were entirely coated with the weight of snow. I thought that if it really was a righteous religion, they would not spend money on a scarecrow building ・・・・・・ because I thought it was shallow. It really was shallow. As I soon learnt, the pastor said, "No one will come to such a borrowed, shabby congregation. Please give us a better synagogue than that Catholic church", he had been praying every morning for two years and 11 months.

I asked some of my high school friends who attended the Catholic Church, and they told

me that they chose the Catholic Church because they had been invited to a mass by a senior member of their club, and they had been "struck" by a high school girl wearing a veil who was sitting next to them. By the way, the reason why this high school girl looked so beautiful and mysterious was because of the building, which produced an exquisite interweaving of light from the stained glass and candles that let the veil through. In the church building I went to, even if the same girl had appeared, my friends would not have been able to dream of their youth.

The building conveys the wrong image of the church. If you make it too westernised, people with a purely Japanese feeling will not want to come. On the other hand, if the building is purely Japanese, people with romantic feelings towards the West will be disappointed. If the building is beautiful, splendid and luxurious, poor people and those who prefer casual style will be put off. But if the building is shabby, the classier people will not look at it. No matter what kind of building you build or where you hold your worship meetings, it is always the building and the place itself that will separate people. Even if the gospel is for people of all races and classes, the church building will select only a small proportion of them.

By nature, a church is not a building, nor does it remain quietly in one place. The church is not just located at 215, 3-2 Hibarigaoka. The church is the body of Christ. It is a redeemed people. It is a community that they are building up by caring for, encouraging and helping each other, as saved by the same love and made alive by the same life. The church is alive in the sparrow forest, in the crow's nest, in the swallow field, in the valley, on the riverbanks, on the riverbanks, on the owl mountain, on the Yoshikiri River, in all parts of the city, in every possible place. Where Christians live, the Church lives. Christians are always living as part of the body of Christ. He lives as the Church. This church is entrusted with the gospel. This church is the ambassador of Christ. This church evangelises. It speaks the gospel where it lives, where it works. Do not misunderstand. The gospel has been entrusted to the church. So the church is responsible for telling it. Not the pastor or the evangelist. It is a matter of course.

What happens then? The gospel is spoken everywhere in the city. The gospel is spoken at all times throughout the city. A table in a restaurant becomes a pulpit, a six-room apartment a seat of grace. People hear the story of Christ everywhere, they hear the story of

salvation at any time. They don't have to make time, change two trains, or shrug their shoulders to visit a church hall to meet the living Christ.

Christ is the Immanuel, the God who has visited man and is with him. The Church is the representative of this Christ, the body of Christ. The Church is what Paul admiringly called 'Christ' (I Cor 12:12; Col 1:24) and what Christ Himself called 'I'. (Acts 9:4-5) So the Church, in this sense, lives with people 'as Christ the Immanuel'. It lives with people, sharing their sufferings and their sorrows. By living in this way, it speaks the Gospel in living in this way. It is never to be lived shut up in one place. A worship meeting is one of the concrete expressions of community, of being one in Christ, not that the worship meeting is the community, i.e. the church. Just as a husband and wife are husband and wife even when they are not together, even when they are separated from each other on the two sides of the earth, so the church is the church even when it is not gathered together. It lives as a church, functions as a church and speaks the gospel as a church.

God's people in the Old Testament era shared their blessings by inviting people into their midst. God's people in the New Testament era are commanded to go out to where the people are and share their blessings.
The modern church, however, is inviting people in the manner of the Old Testament era. In order to invite, there must be welcome, hospitality, treats and entertainment. And it has to be more attractive than the slingshot next door, the bar over there or the theatre here. That's why we programme with films, music and celebrities. The gospel does not invite people. It goes out where the people are and stumbles over them.

Make no mistake, I am not against churches having buildings such as synagogues. I am against churches thinking that they cannot evangelise, exist or grow without a nice building. We just can't stand by and watch the church neglecting more important and essential things and focusing on the building of the church building at the expense of the congregation, i.e. the church itself. We just can't allow that trend to continue.

If the congregation is sure that the church is really necessary and useful, then they should build it according to their own strength. Even if there is a synagogue, I think it would be good if we did activities that are not confined to it. Many churches today, because they have built a synagogue, have killed some of their congregations, their activities have become inwardly confined and have not grown, and they have forgotten to go out and evangelise.

Modern, that is, our churches have lost 90% of those who could be saved because they are only active on Sundays. And it is losing another 90% because it is active only in church halls. In other words, our churches have lost 99%.

Apparently, I, too, have been influenced by the church growth theorists, who are always raising the numbers. However, can we really put churches away in this way, simply on the basis of functionalism and efficiency? Or is it acceptable to discuss church forms solely on the basis of likes and dislikes? Actually, that is exactly what I hate.

The church has its origins in the 'will' of God. It cannot be built or remodelled, built or torn down at will by human beings. It must follow God's blueprint. But it must always go back to the Bible and think theologically. The weakness of the modern church is that it doesn't do that and just inherits tradition and tries to build all sorts of things on top of it.

What does the Bible say about church buildings? It doesn't actually say anything about that. The Bible is silent on the matter of church buildings at all. Why? Because it was of little importance to the church at the time. A close examination of the Bible makes it clear that the early church had no real estate at all, such as church buildings. However, there were no complaints that they could not evangelise because they did not have a church building, or that they could not hold worship meetings, or that they could not educate people, or that it was inconvenient, or that they did not know where it was located, and there was no recommendation or even idea to build a nice church building in order to attract more people and evangelise more effectively.

In fact, the Church at that time could not have real estate because the belief in Christ as Messiah was an unrecognised religion. That said, there is no prayer, or even a wish in the Bible, that this faith would soon be recognised as an official religion and that it would be able to have a church building. It was not until the fourth century that the Church was able to own buildings such as synagogues, and it was not until the faith became the state religion of Rome that it began to build larger and larger synagogues. This served to both demonstrate the prestige of the Ro1ma and to corrupt the Church. However, there is a record of the existence of one but one building for Christian worship in the countryside of Asia Minor, which seems to have been built in the second half of the 2nd century, when Roman oversight did not extend to the area.

Anyway, according to the biblical record, the church existed, grew and multiplied without

a churchyard. So, at the very least, a churchyard is not an absolute requirement of the church. It is very interesting, or rather very sad, to trace the historical process of the churchyard becoming an absolute condition of the church, because it is parallel to the fall of the church. It is better to say that it makes me angry. It is an interesting study, but I don't have time to talk about it now. However, Martin Luther I lit the fire of the Reformation because the evils of a too corrupt congregationalism, the stench of which had reached him. Unfortunately, Luther fought against indulgences and papal authority, but not enough against congregationalism. He apparently had a desire to spread the Koumai in his house church, but he did not go as far as to make it thorough. It would have been a different story if he had been passionate about evangelisation and mission.

The Bible says nothing about churchyards. So he doesn't touch on topics common to modern churches, such as collecting donations for it, borrowing against the property of the congregation, overreaching and splitting the church, or the congregation losing faith. ・・・・・ Apparently, I also have a habit of using Buddhist terminology.

However, there is a tendency in our church to confuse the church with the Old Testament temple. For example, some of my sister and mother organisations in the USA seem to be fond of naming their churches Temples, as is the tradition. In Japan, temple sounds a bit heavy and somewhat Shinto, so it is more common to call it a 'sanctuary', and some people even call it a 'sanctuary'. Some people even call it a 'sanctuary', because temples are called 'houses of God', and there are many people who call church buildings 'houses of God', as if they are also houses where God lives. I hope the pastor doesn't have one, though. I cannot guarantee it.

According to the New Testament, the church is the 'temple of God', i.e. the temple, and the 'house of God', i.e. the dwelling place of God. This is correct theology. It has developed into a false theology, where church equals church hall and church hall equals the temple of the Old Testament era. From there, Christians are encouraged to approach church building with the zeal of Old Testament temple building. It is strictly erroneous for Paul to refer to the church, and all genuine Christians who comprise it, as 'the temple of God' or 'the house of God', as the place where God wants to dwell. For how could the God who made heaven and earth dwell in something made by human hands, such as a temple? There is no way that Paul could have

been unaware of such a thing, so here, of course, he was merely using a popular concept to explain his new theology.

And when he says that God dwells in the church, and thus in the congregation, that is strange for the infinite and omnipresent God. In terms of physical location, the omnipresent God is also present within unbelievers. Even if you make a ball of iron with a diameter of 10 metres and not a bit of space and say that God is not in this ball, God is in that ball. The confidentiality of an object in the physical sense means nothing to God: you can make a ball 10,000 metres in diameter out of lead, which does not even allow X-rays to penetrate it, and it will still be scrawnier than a scruffy sponge to God. That's why it's so hard to explain. The term God lives or dwells is just a way of expressing the new, intimate relationship between God and man in friendly terms so that stupid humans can understand it. Man dwells in a house. It must not be understood in the same way as a pig living in a hut.

Paul's theology that the church, and each believer, is God's temple, God's house, God's dwelling place, was new and groundbreaking, but it was not Paul's original theology. It is characterised by a radical rejection of the Old Testament temple. Christ's disregard for the temple is evident in his words, but it was at the well of Samaria, when he made it most clear that he was the Christ, that he gave the definitive teaching on the uselessness of the temple, or even the obsolete theory of the temple. The fact that the temple is or has become useless cannot be separated from the fact that Christ has come.

Stephen was martyred because he believed in Christ as Lord and spoke the gospel boldly that because of Christ, the temple was no longer useless. The gospel told him that the temple was useless. It was a gospel so good that one good Christian risked his life. What kind of gospel was it? The God who was separated from man, symbolised by the fact that the Holy of Holies was separated by a curtain, became Immanuel, God with man, through Christ the Son, and became God who wants to live in man through the work of Christ. The curtain of the temple was torn in two, not by human hands.

This is a transition from an age in which one place was fixed and restricted as the official place of worship and meeting with God, to an age in which God will receive true worship anywhere and meet men anywhere. The New Testament gospel denies the temple. Anything that restricts the place of meeting with God and restricts the place of worship, even if it is called a church building or a mere rented house, is contrary to the New Covenant Gospel. It denies the meaning of the Cross of Christ. Do not the church-centred activities of our

contemporary churches restrict the places where people can meet with God, whether they know it or not? Are we not depriving people of a place of worship?

By the way, did you know that temples do not come from God's 'will'? The temple came out of the heart of King David, who had become a bit complacent, and God merely accepted it. A similar example is the monarchy. Israel's monarchy was never according to God's 'will', but God accepted it and used the concept as an important saviour or understanding of the Kingdom of God. God accepts man's weakness and uses even his folly.

The temple does not originate from God, but the tabernacle comes from God throughout. The tabernacle that God designated was movable, but the man-made temple could not be moved. The God who ordained the Tabernacle was the One who led men, moved with them and was where they were, albeit to a limited extent in Old Testament times. The Tabernacle was, so to speak, God's basic attitude of trying to approach mankind from His own side. However, after the tabernacle was confined to the temple, God became separated from man and could only be met if man came to visit Him at a fixed place. The picture of man visiting God is not the original Christian picture of the gospel. The congregation-centredness of the modern church is contrary to this original nature of God and the nature of the gospel.

But now we cannot evangelise unless we have a church building or its equivalent. We have no idea what we are supposed to do. The situation will only get worse, not better, when we graduate from Bible schools and seminaries. What is taught in such schools is always based on the assumption that there is a church building or equivalent, and that there are already people in it.

When I was still a Bible school student, various older teachers gave services in the chapel, but many of them ended up talking about their struggles. The most impressive of all was the courageous, lofty and stoic attitude of a senior who was 'called to be a preacher', who preached against the wall many times because he could not get people to come to his worship meetings even after he had done pioneering evangelism. The warrior is a toothy child, even if he does not eat. It is true, but I was honestly impressed. I respected him for his wonderful devotion. I even wanted to visit him at night in the room where he was staying and ask him to teach me. Of course, I have changed my mind now. To be honest, it's ridiculous. (What's the point of preaching to the wall (not devotion)? If you step outside, the streets are full of people. There are people in the park, in your house, in front of your garden. I would rather preach to a cat than to a wall. At least cats have ears. Wait? ・・・・ They say 'walls have ears'. So, that senior

member of the school saw an ear on the wall... .... Mmm! I can do that!

But at the time I thought it was right. On Wednesday, the subject of the next Sunday's sermon was decided. On Thursday, I had an outline. On Saturday, I had prayed for a few hours properly and had written the whole sermon, word for word. Red and blue lines were also drawn. Not infrequently, we even rehearsed according to them. The time for the Sunday worship service arrived. The time had definitely arrived, but not a single person came. 'Lord, send me someone to hear my sermon. Send me someone to hear my sermon. I have spent at least 20 hours preparing this sermon", I used to pray earnestly. I used to listen to the footsteps of people walking outside, sadly hoping that they would come in, or that this time the door would open. Fortunately, I have never preached to the wall. Even if it was a girl with an intelligence quotient of 80 or less, she had a good ear.

But I was never confined to the house. I was forced to do roadside evangelism and street preaching from the time I was a member of the congregation. I preached countless times before I went to Bible school. When I went to Bible school, I was surprised that there was a course called 'preaching studies'. This was understandable, as I had assumed that everyone who went to Bible school had had plenty of practice in preaching. So, in my first preaching studies practice, the critique of my classmates was that I was not young enough. No wonder. I didn't have the same initial impression of being up in the air and slurring my words as they did. I spoke with confidence and dignity, regardless of the content of my speech.

From the second half of my sophomore year, I went to Togenuki Jizo in Sugamo once a week and resumed street preaching. I wasn't that enthusiastic about evangelism. I just thought, "If I stay in this kind of Bible school, I'll forget about my soul". I asked female students to make sashes and senior students who were good at calligraphy to write in black ink. 'Worship not idols', 'Worship the true God'.

With trumpet and tract, I usually preached in the street in front of the Jizo. When the policemen on patrol came, they entered the precincts. Once, a monk came out and politely asked me to leave the precincts while I was preaching. I was indeed confident. The monk was not the least bit angry with a young monk like me. He was calm. That is why the Togenuki Jizo is thriving even today.

Once, a woman who looked like an office worker with a book on her chest ・・・・・ said she was not an office worker but a BG at the time. However, this quickly became the case, thanks

to a successful campaign in a women's weekly magazine that the term business girl (which is now also called giyal) came from the word business girl, which has a very bad meaning in the real English language, and should be correctly called office lady, or OL. This was for the miscellaneous knowledge of the younger, much younger juniors. And a more interesting change in language occurred a few years later. This was a must in order to understand the Japanese concept of right and wrong, their philosophy of life, and therefore their culture.

This is especially interesting for a 'missionary' like myself. If I remember correctly, it began with a foreign student who used a Japanese speech contest for foreigners to express her anger and sadness at the use of the name of her beloved country in the name of a place that had nothing to do with her country and whose business was somewhat shady. This was the beginning of the story. The name of the country where Paul risked his life to evangelise and build many churches, where the seven churches of the Apocalypse were located, which had once adorned the nightscape so brilliantly, completely vanished. However, the sensible people of the country never thought of abolishing their way of life. The name of the country was simply changed to "soap island". ・・・・・ Oh, I'm getting off on a tangent again. Let's get back on track.

Once, a woman who appeared to be a female office worker with a book on her chest handed me a knotted letter. I was so thrilled that I couldn't even be bothered to untie the knot, and when I opened the letter in the shadows, there were only two lines.

Touch or see the hot blood of my tender skin...
You who will not be sad, you who will find the way

It's brilliant. This kind of ridicule is great fun. I hate that the other person was a bit beautiful. I had high hopes, but she was never seen again.

After being sent to a small pioneer mission station in downtown Tokyo, she continued her street preaching. One evening, in a shopping street crowded with shoppers, a young man suddenly came up to me and said, "Senpai, senpai, isn't that you? Surprised, he looked up to see the face of a man who had been one year his junior in the art, drama and literature clubs at his high school in Hokkaido. He was the guy who had almost become a Christian, but failed. I asked him what he was doing here, and he said he was on his way to visit his senior who graduated from the same high school a long time ago, because he runs a dentist's practice near here. When I asked him again what he was doing in Tokyo, he replied, "I'm a university

student. When I asked him what university he had entered, he replied, "Tokyo University. He said, "I went to the University of Tokyo. I asked him where he went to university, to which he replied, "Tokyo University". He was a baseball pitcher on the baseball team at my alma mater, which was a bit of a big name. And yet he got in at the first shot. I felt like shit, but I put on an air of dignity and said, 'I'm a senior. 'Oh no. I missed it. I knew you were my senior,' he repeated repeatedly. What do you mean, "I knew it"? 'I saw you preaching in the distance and thought of you, so I thought I'd come up to see you. I said, "You've heard me preach many times, but you don't believe me". I thought to myself, "Son of a bitch", but I felt nostalgic for the person I had loved for three years in the same club, so I followed him that night to the dentist of a senior member of the club. I was told that thanks to him, I could get free dental treatment, which I had been putting off for a long time because of my monthly salary of less than 3,000 yen.

Anyway, I have done a lot of street preaching. I am now feeling ridiculous about it. I think I did something stupid. I did it because I didn't know what to do. Well, it's comforting to say it's better than not doing it. Incidentally, I don't know of a single person who has been saved through my street preaching so far. Of course, if you are good at street preaching and are confident that you can effectively lead people to salvation, you should do it. I say ridiculous because it is ridiculous for me to do it, and I don't know about others.

My monthly wage is as high as 3,000 yen per month. In an L-shaped apartment of 3 and 6 square metres, 12 or 3 people could fill the room. When 96 people showed up at a children's party, I wanted to report it in the Guinness Book of Records. Naturally, I thought about doing something about it. But I can't come up with a good idea. We have been trained not to come up with good ideas. That's why I wanted a synagogue. I believed that if we had a beautiful synagogue, evangelism would be much easier. I was convinced that the reason my evangelism was not going well was because of the cheap apartments. I dreamt of building a congregation hall, thinking that if I only had faith, I could manage.

One tsubo cost 400,000-500,000 yen. This was the price of land in this area at the time. Moreover, in an overcrowded area, the land that is occasionally available for sale is tucked away and hidden in the back of a complicated alley, and once you wander into it, you are left with a meagre 20 or 30 tsubos where you will never see the light of day again. Like O. Henry's "The Last Leaf", my faith, which had barely withstood the cold rain and wind that beat down mercilessly on me, was quickly shriveled and almost blown away. There are many people. But I, who had been trained in a Bible school, could not evangelise because there were too many

people. Thus, the 'great sermons' that had been churned out, two almost every week, for two years, had at best shaken the eardrums of a few grimy ears, and had ended their mission.

The need for, the importance of, or the difficulty of having, a churchyard varies according to each environment and situation. It must therefore be judged strictly on a case-by-case basis. The need for a synagogue at any cost is a common disease of the average modern evangelist. I therefore recommend the following evaluation table for your consideration.

Advantages of having a synagogue Disadvantages of having a synagogue

(i)

Economic aspects

A

B

C

Social Aspects

Efficiency Aspects

Psychological Aspects

Faith Aspects

Evangelistic strategic aspects

Other
"

Several further aspects could be considered, but are omitted here. For each aspect, everyone should write in what they can think of in terms of advantages and disadvantages. Those that do not belong to any of the aspects should be written in "Other" accordingly. These are then written into a score on a scale of 10, in order of importance. Finally, the scores are combined.

I have done this many times. I have done this for each different piece of land. In most cases, I have come to the conclusion that the total disadvantages outweigh the advantages. I have tried several times with people who think that a churchyard is absolutely necessary, and they have reached the same conclusion, although the differences have narrowed. However, now that I am working as a missionary, I do not impose my opinion on the evangelists and churches I work with. Only when they are fully convinced, evangelistic pastoral work without a congregation is carried out. Generally, my cooperating evangelists are trained to do nothing without a synagogue, so they often do better with one, in spite of all its shortcomings. And on the rare occasions when there are those who do very well without a synagogue, a kind rich missionary will donate money "out of pity for the lack of a synagogue", go to the trouble of finding land, or even preach a wonderfully powerful sermon to the congregation, "Let us embark on building a synagogue with faith".

But still, of the 50 or so pioneering ministries I am responsible for at the moment, the ones that either don't have a synagogue or have a dumb building, but are doing evangelism without being trapped by it, are doing a better job from all points of view. So let me introduce you to a few of them. This phrase 'I will do whatever it takes' has been 'incredibly' annoying me lately. It sounds condescending to me and I don't like it. This expression, too, seems to have its roots in a very Buddhist way of thinking. It comes from a deep view of life that says, "I am kept alive by the mercy of God". This could be a Christian term. We are "by grace", indeed, we are indeed "kept alive". We are "given" to use, we are "given" to serve. But if we use this too much for human beings, it is still condescending.

The Balatok Church is a seven-year-old church that I myself started by visiting the homes of Filipinos. The whole place called Balatok is a gold mining company with about 3,000 employees, and all the land in the steep mountains is owned by the company, so there is no

place to build a church. The population is said to be close to 30,000, but it is actually a small community with many children. If this church had followed the normal 'one church, one congregation, one service' format, it would have been 70-100 people at most. In fact, the Southern Baptist church, which started its mission two years before us and is better funded and staffed, was able to build a congregation with the special help of a company it got through 'connections'. With the support of many more highly qualified seminary students from the Baptist Theological Seminary in Baguio City, a 40-minute drive away, we now have a congregation of nearly 60 worshippers. The pastor of our church is a 'dropout' who, seven years ago, was about to stop being an evangelist after failing in pastoral ministry right out of Bible school. He was encouraged to take up this ministry, and he is just a mediocre, mediocre pastor. However, the attendance at the church's Sunday service has exceeded 400 people. A special two-day service held not long ago attracted more than 550 people.

There is no secret to this. However, this church holds seven worship services on Sundays alone. If you include weekdays, there are nine places. Most of them are in small hamlets around the company, some as far as 40 km away. Furthermore, the church has small Bible-reading meetings every day, not in the morning, not in the afternoon, not at night, but everywhere. There are literally everywhere: in the living room, in front of the garden, in the shed, in the garage, under the mango tree, in the community centre, in the blue ceiling, in the starry sky ceiling, etc. Many gatherings are of two or three people, but because of this there is a strong tribal feeling, with people from all walks of life from nine different tribes speaking different languages hearing the gospel. In a week, considerably more people attend these than attend worship services. This young pastor and his church, with all its weaknesses, has overcome the handicaps that surround it and is doing so well because it is evangelising anytime, anywhere.

Let me explain a little more. The fact that there was no synagogue was a very good thing for the Baratok church. Of course, the inconveniences were endless, and the weak points were as numerous as the crowns of Coke bottles that jingled out of the torn pockets of the dusty children playing in the square in front. But still, if you judge it dispassionately, it grew because it didn't have a congregation.

What would have happened if they had started building a congregation when they had 70 to 100 members, like most Philippine churches? To build a 100-capacity synagogue now, even if it were an embarrassing shed by modern Japanese standards, would have been a huge waste of time and money,
The average income of a congregation in Baratok would be 25 years. If you consider the land,

that's 40-50 years' worth. Put into Japanese terms, it would be 100-200 million yen. It would be a bit more. And cars have been running for 25 years or so, with one car in every 200 houses or so, one TV in every 30 houses, one fridge in every 90 houses, and no savings or property in the congregation that lives for the day. There is no way they could borrow from the bank.

Therefore, the building of a congregation is accompanied by 'exploitation' in the name of 'dedication by faith'. The congregation saves and dedicates children's clothes, baby milk. 'I am not exaggerating; I am not exaggerating at all. It is tempting to pray, 'God bless them.' But in this state of affairs, it takes a long time for a congregation to be built. That is why there are so many congregations in the Philippines that look like they have been thrown out in the middle of construction, with rebar sticking out, half the blocks piled up, no windows, no doors, and the roofs not finished. For that long period of time, the congregation sacrifices and devotes itself to everything. As a result, spiritual growth is neglected and an increasing number of believers die in vengeance. When the synagogue is finally completed, the whole church is breathless. They need to be taken away in an ambulance and immediately given glucose or blood transfusions. However, they actually hold a festival.

So the synagogue is built but the church does not grow. The pastor takes a rest after a long, long battle and settles down completely. The congregation finally fulfils its responsibilities and breathes a sigh of relief. The congregation has finally fulfilled its responsibilities and is relieved to be able to relax. Everyone agrees, "Hey, let's take it easy, no more pressure."

Another way is to ask rich missionaries. Here in the Philippines, there are missionaries without jobs lying around like empty Coke cans on the side of the road. This is a Japanese roadside story, as there is seldom a can of Coke in this poor country and empty cans are never lying around because they sell for a lot. I hate my job, but I have to send stories of my spectacular exploits back home, and I can manage with $5,000 or $10,000 or so. However, this church must know that it will be the 'fruit of the missionary's work'. The missionary can then continue to provide further support. The church gets a congregation, the missionary gets honour and support. Blessed. Blessed.

Or how about this way? The pastor goes to the USA with a collection of donations from the congregation and appeals for donations, tickling the 'big hearts' of Amerindians who want to see the 'instant effect'. This is a pretty good way of doing it. If you take photos of the poor and miserable, you can collect donations more quickly, or if you go to the trouble of building a hut out of palm fronds and bring photos of a meeting there, it works very well. It would be even

more effective if there were naked children playing in front of the hut. Still, it is good if the pastor comes back with the money he collected. In this country, you don't have to go all the way to the zoo to find a lot of animals called pastors who go to the USA to collect donations and never come back.

The people of this country, which has been an American colony for half a century, harbour both an intense longing and an equally intense resentment towards the USA. Americans are Amerindians and have a certain guilt and superiority complex towards the Philippines as a former occupying power. Moreover, the Filipinos, who speak English easily, and who serve them like dogs, wagging their tantalising tails, begging for pity, and trying their best to show affection and obedience (if they can afford it), enjoy a secret sense of superiority and satisfaction that they cannot enjoy in their own country, where they are either aristocrats or very wealthy. The Filipinos can enjoy the secret sense of superiority and satisfaction of aristocrats or wealthy people, which they cannot enjoy in their own country. Except in a few cases, missionaries are no exception.

If this pretty Filipino says he is poor and in need, he will give you money, one way or the other. At least that's how most of them came. However, the Filipinos secretly harbour a growing resentment towards the US. The cause of this resentment is not based on facts, such as the brutal actions of the Imperial Japanese Army, but rather on trivial misunderstandings and misinformation, but anyway, the resentment is deep. So Filipinos, no matter how many good things they have done for us, are not as grateful or as righteous as Americans expect them to be. This is probably due to the common belief in Southeast Asia that it is natural for the rich to help the poor, and evil not to.

At any rate, when the Americans discovered that the Filipinos were not as grateful or as willing to serve faithfully as they had hoped, a kind of panic set in. Missionaries can even experience what is called a nervous breakdown, or in the parlance of a bygone era, a nervous breakdown.

We were fed up with this. That's why we didn't "take it easy" and build the synagogue.
We didn't build a congregation. What happened as a result? Pastors and churches were able to concentrate on what is most important as a church, instead of being distracted by things like synagogues, which have little to do with the essence of the church. They worshipped God, studied the Bible, loved each other and evangelised. The pastor was free from all the worries of building a church building, and the congregation was free from extra financial burdens, so they could speak the gospel without anxiety and conscientiousness. Many repeated their

excitement when they saw people being saved, changed and healed by the gospel they had spoken so poorly. It soon became contagious throughout the church. Inevitably, the number of believers grew. Donations also increased.

Much of the offering was used for evangelistic work and the training of lay evangelists. Evangelism became more and more active and the number of lay evangelists exceeded 10, including some full-time. The church continues to support them, though not sufficiently. Also, for example, when a family was saved, whose husband fell ill with tuberculosis early in life after having 14 children, and whose wife, who was as skinny as dried cod under the ・・・・ eaves of the house, had been working a day job for 15 pesos a day (just over 100 yen), even though she only continued to have children after her husband fell ill with tuberculosis, she immediately gave 60 kg of rice a month (the wife's When a poor member of the congregation falls ill, he buys medicine for him and takes care of the wife and children of a man who was killed by a gangster. These things are kept up all the time. The truth is that ・・・・・・ sometimes forgotten ・・・・・・ this church has no synagogue, no piano, not even a pulpit. But there is proof of being a disciple of Christ. There is love for one another.

'Anyone' evangelism.

So, is it enough if we do 'anytime, anywhere' evangelism, which is not restricted to Sundays and church halls? Not so fast. Just because two of the four legs that were cut off have recovered does not mean that a healthy octopus can be produced. We still have to make sure that the other leg grows back. Now let's talk about the other leg. It means that anyone can evangelise. It is not a particularly new dish. So many of you have already tasted it, but my seasoning is somewhat different. Some people call it 'dry' or 'bitter', but I don't think it's poisonous. I will be happy to give it to you. However, I would say, "Don't be wasteful. It's just frustrated dust and rubbish. I'm just a frustrated, angry, raging piece of dust," to which I have nothing to say in reply.

The days of only the pastor doing the hard work of evangelism are over," "mobilising the congregation is the biggest challenge," "use the congregation," "congregational power" - these are the words that are often said. It is now being treated as a biblical way of doing things, more than just an efficiency issue, as the point "equip the saints for works of service" (Ephesians 4:12), which was not clear in the King James Version and other translations some time ago, is beginning to be properly understood. But are congregations really doing enough? Do pastors

really understand the Bible's teaching on this? The congregation is still neglected. The congregation is still forgotten. They are still spoilt. The pastors don't know. They don't understand. What the Bible teaches.

So the average church is a dictatorship of the pastor, with at best a good, committed congregation working as 'one arm of the pastor' and very, very much not part of the body of Christ. Even in church services, well, the best service is the presiding, and you are never allowed to preach unless you are very good at it, i.e. unless the pastor is ill or on a trip. Moreover, unless the pastor's wife, who was annoyed by her husband's lousy preaching, was fortunately ill, the congregation had no place to go. There is no work in the church today that a big man could take seriously and be willing to take in. It is all tiny work. Don't try to reason with me by saying things like, 'There is no small work in the Lord's work'. I am speaking very seriously.

I was itching to do something for God. So I went to church from morning till night, and when I saw it was work, no matter how big or small, easy or difficult, I just went on and on and on, taking care of everything. Eventually, I was scolded by the pastor a lot. It was very disconcerting to have him complain about my earnest, hard-working and spontaneous work, which I thought I was doing very well and very efficiently. It is a memory from my high school days. Now, however, I can understand the pastor's feelings. He scolded me, saying, "I have created jobs for various members of the congregation to serve, but because you are doing everyone else's work, there is no place for service, and the congregation doesn't grow. Congregations grow by serving. Those who just attend meetings or study the Bible do not grow. The 23-year-old country pastor, who was poor and could not even go to high school, knew this by experience. Theologically, it was highly questionable. ・・・・・・・

There is not much service in the church. The modern church system is such that a slightly competent pastor can take care of most of the work, and there is not much service to be done, and yet it is a chore to take care of the details.
The modern church system is such that a slightly competent pastor can generally get things done, and the only service that can be said to be done is trivial and tedious chores. That is why the congregation is not passionate about service. They don't feel involved. Do you hear people saying, "What kind of work is that for a big man?"　So most pastors are relegated to chores and live out their lives in a cozy way. It is good for the pastor to prepare the work for the congregation. But the problem is with the modern church, which otherwise has no work to be done with a sense of stake.

I believe that the congregation should preach, initiate pioneering evangelism and pastoral care. Most of the work of pastors today can be done admirably by congregations. I believe that from the bottom of my heart. We hope that for every teacher who has left Bible school or seminary, there should be about ten lay evangelists or pastors.

Now, here again, many fellow workers must say, 'No way'. 'Not just anyone can be an evangelist. The work of a pastor is not something that can be done by ordinary believers.

First of all, I would like to talk about the call of the evangelist, the call of the pastor and the call of the missionary. Is there really such a special 'calling'? What is important is what the Bible says, not subjective experiences such as who saw a vision or heard a voice. Then let's find out if the work of evangelists and pastors, or missionaries, is so special and difficult.

Unfortunately, I do not have a Japanese Bible word index. And since I am not serious enough to re-read the entire Japanese Bible and find out how many times the word 'calling' is used, I opened three English concordances. I opened up three English concordances to find a word that could be translated as 'vocation' in Japanese, or a word that could be related to the concept. I counted them by staring at a Greek word that I had almost forgotten as atonement for not learning it properly, so don't expect me to be precise.

As a result, the New Testament has ・・・・ the Old Testament, with all due respect to ・・・・ the Old Testament, where events seem to be more important than words as far as the 'calling' is concerned. ・・・・ The results show that in the New Testament the word for the concept commonly called 'calling' occurs more than 60 times. Of these, more than 55 times it is used in the sense of "salvation", which ・・・・ probably ・・・・ is, after all, a lay scholar. In other words, 90% of the time, it is used as one word that expresses the great truth of salvation, as well as 'redemption', 'being born again', 'entering the kingdom of God', 'gaining eternal life' and so on. The phrase 'God's calling and gifts never change', often quoted by evangelists as a word of comfort when they are discouraged, is also not talking about the calling of the evangelist or the pastor. It is talking about the excellencies of 'salvation'.

The call to the 'office' of evangelist or pastor, which is closest to the current popular understanding, is hardly ever mentioned. If one dares to look, there is one reference to a high priest in Old Testament times (Hebrews 5:4). (Hebrews 5:4) However, this Old Testament office has now been abolished because of Christ. We Protestant Christians, who cannot fit in

with Catholicism, at least with the theory of universal priesthood, believe that. So this cannot be applied to us today. Another example is where Paul can be understood as saying that he was called to be an apostle. (Rom 1:1, I Cor 1:1) In this case, however, when read in the original Greek, it is doubtful whether Paul really intended to say that he was 'called to the apostleship'. First, was he called to be an 'apostle' or was he made an apostle after the fact of being 'called', i.e. after he was saved? Secondly, Paul does not seem to have thought of an apostle as an office, but as someone who fulfils an 'apostolic function'. This is made clear by the word he uses to qualify the word apostle. In the same chapter of Romans 1:3, he speaks of 'having received the ministry of an apostle', and in I Timothy 1:11, he says that he was appointed as an apostle. They are said shortly after, speaking of what it means to be called and saved.

Furthermore, in both Romans and I Corinthians, immediately after the translation 'called to be an apostle', it says that both the Romans and the Corinthians received the same calling. So, on the principle of correct biblical understanding, that is, on the common sense of understanding from the context, we should judge that Paul does not bring up the concept of an 'apostolic calling' here. This is a mistaken translation based on a false preconception that there is a calling to be 'called as an apostle'.

It is clearly stated that the call to ministry was given to Barnabas and Saul in Antioch, albeit only once. (Acts 13:2) Somehow the colloquial translation does not translate 'calling', but this is the most obvious 'calling' in the whole Bible. The calling in regard to place occurs only once, when Paul hears the cry of the Macedonians and expresses it as 'being convinced of the calling'. However, this is not a permanent calling, but the equivalent of temporary guidance and is only a subjective conviction of Baulo.

According to the sociologist Max Weber, Calvin's theology contributed significantly to the development of capitalism, and a translation that makes sense is found in the King Ziemes translation of the Bible. According to it, it reads: 'Walk worthy of the vocation to which you have been called' (Ephesians 4:1). (Ephesians 4:1) The original word for 'vocation' in this case is 'calling', and a more honest translation would be 'in keeping with the calling to which you were called'. According to traditional Calvinism, since all vocations are God's calling, "cherish the vocation you have inherited from your parents and work hard", and any dissatisfaction with your vocation would be regarded as dissatisfaction with God, and any attempt to change your job would be looked down upon as going against God's calling. The church is not that far removed from the modern church.

Well, the modern church doesn't go that far, either, but it does consecrate the so-called 'teaching' as 'ministry', emphasising its special calling and insisting on its fundamental difference from the laity.

Let us acknowledge that Paul was called. But that said, where is the reason why all those who now wish to become pastors or missionaries must have the same calling as Paul? Bauro's experience is only Paul's experience, not Timothy's or Ru'ki's. Nor can it be Mark's experience, for that matter. If the call had been of such decisive importance, Paul and Barnabas would not have argued so miserably. If Mark had been called, Barnabas would have won. If not, Baulo wins. It's that simple.

At least as far as the New Testament record shows, there is no evidence of any calling except for Paul and Barnabas. The disciples who were called by Jesus on the shores of the lake of Galilee were then chosen as apostles after a long apprenticeship, not 'called' to be apostles from the start. Nowhere does it say that they were called to be apostles. In the Old Testament, the stories of Abraham, Moses, etc., and the callings of Isaiah and Jeremiah are often mentioned. And this is certainly enough to justify the concept of 'calling'. The question is, however, whether this should apply to all those who aspire to be evangelists today.

I am a man who cannot be compared to Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, Barnabas and others, but I have been a missionary for quite a long time, one of the few Japanese today. However, he has not received a 'calling'. I am one of the few Japanese who have been a missionary for quite a long time. However, the reason why my work is so dull is not because I am not 'called', but because I am small and lazy.

I have an ambition to be a missionary. ・・・・ 'Boys, be ambitious'. This is the correct translation. So, having ambitions, I, too, a 'miserable' disciple of Clark's, ・・・・・・ anyway, told my ambitions to a teacher who was then the head of the overseas mission department. The teacher, who was a hardcore veteran evangelist, said: "You said, 'I want to be a missionary. Did you hear God's voice saying, 'Be a missionary'? I replied, puzzled. No, but I want to be a missionary," he said, "and anyone who wants to become a missionary must hear God's clear voice. 'God, please let me hear your voice,' I prayed. No, but I want to be a missionary. He crossed his arms and stared at the ceiling. I feel as if I have no choice. I was embarrassed and desperate, so I asked him again. I asked him again, embarrassed and desperate, "You are working at XXX now, but did you hear a clear voice telling you to work at XXX?"

"・・・・・・・! ・・・・・・・・! The most important thing to remember is that the best way to get the most out of your money is to make sure that you are getting the most out of your money.

When I was taking psychology in seminary, I had to write a report on the psychology of missionary callings. I attempted to conduct detailed interviews with more than 50 missionaries from different countries and organisations, and all but two said that a special calling is necessary to become a missionary. Their own experiences of calling were one 'vision', one 'dream' and one 'hearing the voice', and all the rest had 'inner conviction by the Holy Spirit' and 'super-spiritual' responses. However, when they were questioned in more detail, the responses were much closer to everyday language, such as 'family influence' or 'hearing about the missionaries', respectively.
It became much closer to everyday language.

At this time I was taking a short-term course at another seminary with a 'mature missionary couple', and I always took a ride in their car to make do with the struggling students. Of course, I have already interviewed these two separately. One day, in traffic, the conversation turned to my report. The husband was one of the rare two who said he had not been 'called'. The wife, however, was the one who clearly heard the 'voice'. Moreover, in the section "If someone becomes a missionary without a clear calling, what action would you take against him?", she gave a rasping answer, "I would advise him to return to his own country because he is misguided in his will".

The argument between the two, when they found out each other's view on the calling of the other missionary, was so much fun for me to listen to that it didn't bother me at all to be late for the course because a big truck was stalled in the middle of the road. But for them, it was a big problem! His wife said, "Ma'ah! You have been deceiving me for more than 30 years that you were not called! If I hadn't been called, I wouldn't have become a missionary. Even if I had, I would have stopped living such a terrible life after a few years. The only reason I have continued until now is because I am called.

Finally, crawling out of the sea of black exhaust fumes spewed by the swarming, ant-like cars, the master said softly as the classroom came into view. 'Honey',・・・・ this is untranslatable,・・・・・ 'you've been very capable since you were young, and you'd have made a good missionary.' ・・・・・ Hmmm... ・・・・・ "But you are beautiful, by the way, and everyone longs for you. ・・・・ ・・・・・ lie,・・・・ not so much. ・・・・・

"I was busy with necklaces, bangles, false eyelashes and... ・・・・ that's right. ・・・・ "I didn't want to be a missionary at all. God gave you the gifts you needed to be a missionary, but you didn't have the commitment." ・・・・・・ understand, understand・・・・ "So God had compassion on you and spoke to you so that you would not go astray. You should be thankful." ・・・・・Mrs. Shobon・・・・・.

In my case," she said. I wanted God to use me to the full, even though I'm such a trivial person. That's all I wanted. I prayed to God to let me be a missionary. That's why God didn't need to make me hear his voice or show me a vision. I'm so thankful that God spoke to you, because otherwise you wouldn't be here. Because otherwise you wouldn't have married me at all. ・・・・ Damn! That's good. American men are ・・・・ but wait, ・・・・・. If being a husband means you always have to treat your wife sweetly and well like this ・・・・. Ahhh. Thank God I am Japanese.

It seems that among pastors, evangelists and missionaries today, there are more intuitive, emotional, or better to say emotional types of people, rather than the type of people who analyse things carefully and think about them. The calling to be an evangelist is emphasised, but the concept of that vital calling is not clear. However, without this, it is impossible to be an evangelist. Serious, competent and analytical people think like this or like that. In this way, they are forever unsure of their calling and unable to make a commitment. Intuitive and emotional people, however, are just fine once they have made up their minds. It can be a dream, a lightning strike while praying, or even the barking of a dog. It is still better to believe the suppositions of others as a calling. They do not give much thought to whether they have the right gifts to stand as evangelists. If they think about it, they are self-indulgent.

I imagine that a great tragedy could have been avoided to some extent if we had examined prospective evangelists in terms of their 'inner calling' and 'outer calling', as the Reformers used to do.

An 'internal calling' is a conviction based on personal subjectivity, while an 'external calling' is an objective observation of the Church that approves of it. A genuine 'calling' is established through the examination of the church's observation of the person's strong faith and commitment. This is not a biblical 'theology of calling', but it is a practical wisdom and, from an ecclesiological point of view, is correct in moving the work of the church out of the field of the subjective conviction of the individual to a place where the whole community of the church is involved.

The great tragedy is that people who should not be evangelists have become evangelists, thus ruining their own lives and even causing the death of the Church. They probably must have made a sincere commitment. But they did not have the necessary gifts to become an evangelist. It is God who gives the gifts. God does not demand that they use gifts He has not given them. He does not want someone to be an evangelist who has not given them the gifts necessary to be an evangelist. In practice, however, this is surprisingly often the case.

How blessed the Church would be if they had remained faithful members. How fruitful their lives would have been. But, unfortunately, many of them have relied only on their 'inner calling'. Or some must have mistaken a temporary emotional high for a calling. Moreover, ・・・・・ this is quite common in countries where becoming a pastor or evangelist can be surprisingly rags to riches. ・・・・・ even lazier than me, and failed at my third-choice school,
I've been called and come to a Bible school. It is a tragedy.

There is another tragedy that is no less tragic. It is the fact that because of the 'mystical calling' that is often emphasised and preached about with great emphasis, serious people who do not have such a calling, who have been gifted to be evangelists, do not become evangelists and use their precious abilities given to them for God's glory and the blessing of the church in the things of the world. It is a fact. Many of the Christians who have been employed by prestigious companies and received express promotions, or who have become doctors and built large hospitals, or who have made a name for themselves as lawyers, or who have become school teachers and are dedicated to the education of children, were once people who wanted to become evangelists and sought a 'mystical calling', but did not receive it. They are the ones who wanted to be evangelists and did not get the 'mystical call'. Or they are those who justify their inadequacy by saying that they did not have a 'calling' because they lacked a bit of courage, determination and faith, i.e. they could not dedicate themselves. This is very common in lands where being an evangelist is disadvantaged in every way. What a great loss. It is a tragedy.

It is a common human weakness to unwittingly justify oneself. The evangelist is no better. The preacher who can't even stand up to me, who never produces a proper sermon, who never prepares a meeting, who has nothing to do except slumber and sleep except on Sundays, is a "called" person who never allows his congregation to interfere, criticise or criticise him. They say, "What is wrong with those whom God has anointed?

So why not stop wrapping the concept or event we usually call a 'calling' in a mystical veil, and rather express it in more everyday language? The Bible uses words like 'establish' and 'appoint', which are easier to understand. Or 'devotion' is also better than 'calling'. The important thing is not whether you had a special mystical experience, but whether you actively responded to God's love and expectations.

The church is a community of the called, and all true Christians are called. This calling is not merely a calling to God's love, to the Kingdom of God, but a calling to the community called the Body of Christ and to the mission entrusted to that community. And this mission is evangelisation. Every Christian is called to the mission of evangelisation. Of course, each of us plays a different role, depending on the gifts we have been given. However, we should respond positively to that calling and seek the path of devotion according to our gifts. Choosing that path may require prayer, self-analysis in the light of Scripture, complete self-abandonment ・・・・・, a horrifying and hair-raising term. But it is often not God's job to choose. It is man's role, and man chooses according to the responsibility that is placed upon him. It is God who certifies it and sets it up.

This is the same as in marriage. God does not find a partner for us and attach us to him, just as we find a partner for our cats and dogs, saying that they have a pedigree or a certificate. Human beings search for a partner and marry on their own responsibility. God recognises this and makes it a marriage under God. In the case of the path of devotion, of course, as already mentioned, you should not only make your own decision, but also listen to the opinion of the whole church. However, if God has clearly indicated your marriage partner to you beyond doubt, do not go against him. God is your owner and buyer. God has the authority and right to trample on your thoughts, wishes and appeals and make you marry your hated Okachimenko-chan or Gugiyappe-kun. In the same way, God also has the right to forcibly send you to the place you hate the most, as the missionary you hate the most.

By the way, is the work of an evangelist or a pastor so difficult that the average layman cannot do it?　I admit that these jobs are not easy. It is not something that anyone can do if they just go to Bible school, nor is it something that he can do if he says he is "called".　However,

that does not mean that it is so unique and difficult that it can only be done if one is 'called' and has graduated from a 'Bible school'. The problem is the idea that he can only do the work if he is officially recognised as a 'teacher' with the approval of a consultative body such as the denomination, and that he cannot do it otherwise. Pastoral ministry in the New Testament is not ministry by 'office', but only by the function of gifts.

A pastor who has graduated from a Bible school and is certified as a teacher, but has failed in actual pastoral ministry and has nowhere to go but back to his village to tend to his carabao (buffalo), and yet is gracefully called a pastor, is not a pastor... In the Philippines, ・・・・ at least in the area where I work, there are many such pastors, but they are not pastors in the sense of being pastors. There are as many pastors as there are decent pastors. ・・・・・ Even if they did not go to Bible school, even if they do not have mystical experiences, if they love souls, adore the Lord, use their gifts with overflowing passion to speak the gospel and feed the resulting congregation, then they are in effect genuine pastors. Essentially, such a person - one whose gifts, commitment and fidelity have been proven by practice - should, if necessary, be accredited as a minister. And, according to my experience, it is often such evangelists who do the more radiant work.

All those who did pastoral work in the New Testament were amateurs. Therefore, pastoral ministry was essentially something that could be done well by laymen. Church administration, preaching, psychology, counselling, organisational theology and biblical theology are all there to help pastors, not to prevent those who have not studied them in the classroom from becoming pastors. There is an argument that the standard of education for pastors should be raised because the standard of general education has risen. This is unbiblical, no matter how you think about it. What is needed is not a higher standard of education, but a real spiritual standard.

Even in Jesus' time, the Galileans were known for being crude and uneducated: 11 of his 12 disciples were from Galilee, and only one of the rest was from Judea, where the standard of education was higher. And he turned out to be a traitor. At that time in the Roman Empire there were many religions, many philosophies, many schools, and the 12 disciples were totally ignorant of all of them. Indeed, there was Paul. There was Le force. There was also Apollos. But they were the outstanding ones among the tens or hundreds of thousands of Christians, not the average worker. The same is true today. Seminaries compete with the schools of the world, they are so stretched, so desperate for this degree or that degree at any cost, that pastors are scrambling to get them. It would be nice if those who really deserve it would study in the

right way, but it is annoying that everyone is trying to get a degree.

In the main, a theology degree is like sticking a self-made medal on one's chest. Idi Amin. This Ugandan tyrant had 29 orders hanging from his chest, 26 of which he gave himself. What business is it of ours that the Soka Gakkai has built their post graduate school and issued them PhDs in their religion? I often fall into the pit that those who have not graduated properly from a decent school often fall into. And then I think about the foolish things. I can't do it because I didn't finish school.

Why am I surrounded by a bunch of PhDs and masters' evangelists? Of course, there are decent, fresh and brilliant people, but there are also many who are only fresh in their speech and can't do any work at all. These people probably did not become evangelists out of an irresistible passion for the soul. They may have graduated from Bible schools or seminaries and failed to do proper work even though they actually went out to evangelise. That's why he was able to become a doctor. If you do decent work, if souls are saved and you have a congregation, you will finally get busy, the temperature of your passion will rise and you will be willing to die for them. You can't just walk into a classroom and leave them behind for a minute or two. Perhaps they have mistakenly thought that their inability to do proper work in the field of pastoral evangelism is due to a lack of learning, and have re-entered universities or seminaries. What is lacking is often dedication, sacrifice and practical ability, not scholarship. Anyway, you study and get a PhD based on that misconception.

Anyone with an average brain, enough time and money can get such a thing. But evangelism is not like that. So, even if you become a doctor, you can't evangelise. So they teach in Bible schools and seminaries. That's miserable. Those who teach are still teaching, but those who are taught are annoyed. An evangelist trained in these conditions has to be very competent from the start to be able to do good work. I know a few people who failed as missionaries, returned home, got a PhD in missionary studies and are now teaching in seminaries. ・・・・・ It's a funny story.

One of my seminary classmates was an unapologetically energetic Pentecostal evangelist. For some mistake, he seemed to have taken a particular liking to me. Maybe it was because I belonged to a Pentecostal organisation. When I was writing reports, he would ask me about this and that. Somewhere there is a myth that the Japanese are smart. However, his reports were nothing short of pathetic. It was embarrassing to listen to him, and there were times when I felt an itch on the right side of my fourth vertebra. He is now a doctor and president

of a bible college. He was good at getting on people's good side and was a good pusher, so he got the Japanese and Korean monolithic Bentecostal churches to give him a lot of money to build the college. It is the custom in this country that if you find a money tree, you become an independent boss. You don't know the saying, "Don't be the chicken head, but don't be the dragon tail", but that is exactly the culture of this country. He has followed this and is now at peace and at ease, having let no one interfere with him.

His doctorate, a D.D., must be an honorary doctorate. He must have bought it from a dubious American school using donations from the Japanese and Korean churches. For a few hundred thousand dollars, you can buy a respectable doctorate. How can he get a proper honorary doctorate when he is a few years older than me and hasn't done much work? If it is a doctorate that you studied for, I bow to your efforts. I am sure you must have gone through a lot of hard work. But what kind of doctorate can you get with that head?

The masses should be able to deal with the masses with the power of the masses. It is wrong for a few to serve the masses with the power of the elites. I am, by all accounts, an ordinary man. People of my stature can be found everywhere. The church is full of them. I am an evangelist. I am an ordinary person, so I do ordinary work. It would be a tragedy and a comedy if I aimed to be more than average. If I can do the work, many ordinary people can do it. Rather than one superhuman, it is ten thousand ordinary people. And these ordinary people should not immediately become vocational evangelists. They should first work as lay people, using the gifts they have been given. Otherwise, the church will quickly become financially bankrupt. The early churches were able to pastor hundreds of thousands of congregations successfully because they had many such lay pastors. Those who rose to prominence among them became the leaders of the higher ranks.

I am an ordinary man. So I can't do anything spectacular as a missionary. It is a dream come true to be a missionary in my hometown. I don't even understand the local language well. When I thought I was speaking Ilolikino, it turned out to be Kankanai, and when I thought I was speaking Kankanai, it turned out to be Ibaloi, or I was mistaking Tagalog and Pangasinan, which have the same pronunciation but completely opposite meanings, so it was all very incoherent. Therefore, no matter what you do or where you go, you always need an interpreter. Without the help and cooperation of the locals, the poor missionaries cannot do anything. Because I am such a missionary, the locals are not afraid of me, they are amused and help me. From the very beginning, everything I do is based on discussion and cooperation with the local people. To my delight, the locals soon become as good at their work as I am. Soon they

will overtake me. And the same thing happens between the local evangelists and the congregation.

Most of my co-teachers were once failed workers and 'dropouts', and I did not gather promising men with money, like other missionaries. Therefore, they are ordinary people just like me. Because they are ordinary people, they cannot do much on their own. They have to rely on the power of the congregation for everything. So we do everything together with the congregation. And, of course, among the believers, there will be those who are better than the evangelist in this respect and better than the pastor in that respect. Some of them will have more potential than the leader, the evangelist, in almost all areas.

The evangelists will be very grateful to see the congregation overtake them, just as the missionaries who were their leaders, ・・・・・ at least for a time, ・・・・・・ looked forward to being overtaken by the local evangelists. The congregation experiences great satisfaction that they are expected, trusted and appreciated, that they are useful.

Let's look a little further at the example of the Palatinate Church. The pastor, who was a typical dropout, did not think he was better than others. Therefore, he has no difficulty in finding better preachers in his congregation. It is also easy to find someone who can do pioneering evangelism better than you. This is the way it is for everyone. So he is not worried about the seven service meetings on Sundays, even though he can only attend two at most. In my view, it's a completely lousy service, but the pastor seems to think it's better than doing it by himself. That's not wrong. And it's certainly better than me rushing in with my own haste and forcing them to hold a mouldy, Japanese-style worship service.

So, despite its financial, human resource and geographical handicaps, the church has continued to grow and now has about 10 lay evangelists, with about 10 others being trained as potential lay evangelists in due course. A few of them have become full-time lay evangelists. Although their academic standards are lower than those of Bible school graduates, they are generally not far behind, but even ahead, in terms of their enthusiasm and practical work. They are more committed, not because of some vague notion of 'calling', but because of proven gifts in their daily service. Many are older than the Bible school graduates and have social skills and common sense. Of course, if some of them want to go to Bible school or other schools for better ministry, we will find out the possibilities according to the actual situation. We are not denying serious, purposeful study.

But can we recognise such congregational work as theologically legitimate? That is the important interrogative. My desire is not simply to argue pragmatism and utilitarianism about effective evangelism or how the church can grow faster, but to search for what the church should be biblically and theologically. The church is not a for-profit organisation or a corporation. If the Church has to sacrifice either growth in numbers or economic growth in order to be a true church, I am willing to do so.

The truth is, I have read books on missions, evangelism, congregational training, church growth, church administration, etc.
I have been reading books on missions, evangelism, congregational training, church growth, church administration, etc. Because of my presence abroad, relatively few are written in Japanese, but every two years, when I make the Returned Church Tour, I usually read whatever I can find of that kind. Since I travel all over Japan, I have a lot of time on my hands. I have plenty of time to read them, as I travel all over Japan. For this reason, I don't do much personal evangelism during my travels these days. This is not good.

A few years ago, I received a postcard from a stranger. It said that 20 years ago I had personally evangelised him on the train. This was an opportunity for him to make a commitment, and he is now doing pastoral evangelism in Sapporo. I visited him on my way to the next church tour, as he had written, "If you are ever in the neighbourhood, please drop by". He was the pastor of a church on the outskirts of Sapporo, which had a rather impressive-looking church building. He was teaching Greek at some kind of Bible school. A few dozen minutes of evangelism 20 years ago was repaid with an evening of delicious food and hospitality.

I was also touring a church in Japan when, after the usual meeting, a lady about my age came up to me and said: 'Excuse me, sir, I'm sorry. She looked at me closely and broke off her speech: "Excuse me, but may I ask...? I was in Okinawa at the time, and I was on the night train from Kagoshima about ・・・・・・15 years ago. I was in Okinawa at the time, so I took the night train from Kagoshima when I left for Tokyo, just once. I was in Okinawa at the time, so I took the night train from Kagoshima when I left for Tokyo, just once. I was wondering if you didn't know me during the whole sermon. ・・・・ I meet a lot of people, and if it was so long ago, ・・・・ I'd be disappointed. But that is to be expected, isn't it? Fifteen years ago, he

told me a Bible story when I was on a night train from Kagoshima. That was the start of it, and now I have a Christian family and am a mother of two children. Today I was in my husband's hometown, and I just attended this church that was nearby. It was really a coincidence or ・・・・ God's guidance..." Her story went on and on, and I was finally remembering what had happened 15 years ago. But for the life of me, my memories did not match up. I remember that the girl at that time should have been a little darker and had a round nose on a round face. I couldn't help but stare at the fair-skinned, running bridge of her nose. ・・・・・The night train did not derail, but I am derailing again. ・・・・・

I was not supposed to do this. ・・・・・ The Lord guided me when I got on the night train.・・・・・ I have no complaints about this.・・・・・ "Guided" is not my word, but I always think of the person who comes alongside me as "or I don't know if God has put them under my responsibility".

Anyway, getting back to the subject, my impression from reading various books is that many of them are practical, concrete 'guides to success', which are quite informative, but have a weak biblical foundation. Some are quite theologically written, traditional but not biblical. The question of whether the work of evangelism or pastoral care is biblical should be asked before considering whether it is "successful" or "efficient", or whether it is Presbyterian or Baptist. We should not get caught up in success, efficiency or tradition and ignore the basics that the Bible teaches.

So, what does the Bible teach about the work of believers? I would like to explain what I take to be the very basics. However, I will not deal too much with that point, as you know that the work of the believer has been emphasised in the past from the theory of universal priesthood, and more recently from the more correct understanding of Ephesians 4:11-12. The point I am trying to make may be a self-serving interpretation or a contrivance, as I have not yet heard or read anyone else's theory. I would like someone with more theological background to judge that.

I would like you to stop and look at I Corinthians 12:13. There, all true Christians, baptised into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, it is clearly stated. However, in the Japanese Bible, this point is ambiguous and needs explanation. Perhaps the translators of the Japanese Bible have dared to translate it incorrectly in order to reinforce their own self-serving ecclesiology.
In Japanese, it is possible to interpret baptism, or the rite of baptism, as being performed in

order to become a member of the Church. That baptism is then said to be sanctioned by the Holy Spirit.

However, according to the Greek original, "We are all ・・・・・・ baptised into one body by one Spirit ・・・・". Incidentally, the five English Bibles at hand all translate it that way. One body, that is, baptised into the body of Christ by the Spirit, rather than being baptised by the Spirit to become the body of Christ.

First of all, it is all Christians. Among them are many who are morally very low and out of touch, as were many of the Christians in Corinth who were the recipients of this letter. They include those who have not recovered from their smoking habit, who frequent bars, are addicted to playing mahjong, cannot stop playing pachinko, get angry easily, speak ill of others, do not return borrowed money, and are just plain bad people. It also includes people who cannot speak, cannot hear, cannot see, cannot walk or stand. It includes those who could not go to primary school because of their low intelligence quotient, and those who have grown old and completely blunted. Such people are also included.

Since they are all Christians, they range from those who are 50 years old to those who were born on the third day of their lives.
are also included. There are those who have read through the Bible 43 times, as well as those who are still drinking milk and have not yet been diapered, and those who are underdeveloped. From every theologian, there are also those who do not even know that the Bible is made up of 66 books.

All of them have been baptised into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who has baptised them, not the pastor, the missionary, the board or the presbytery. The church is given no right or room to interfere with who should and should not be baptised. It belongs entirely to the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit baptises by His own decision.

The word baptise is a word Paul dares to choose and has a strong meaning. It is used of a dyer who dips the cloth firmly into the water containing the dye, and not merely to 'adhere', 'attach', 'add', 'join', 'stick' or 'tie together'. Paul is here explaining what it means to be in Christ, ・・・・・ which was his forte theology, and how Christians are mysteriously made one with Christ.

The union is so deep, so strong and so intimate that it is impossible to find any point of contact,

which must be the word baptised. When Paul wrote this section, he must have been recalling his own experience of wandering in the sea for a day and night in a maritime accident. When you are dropped into the water, above, below, to the right and left, everything around you is water. Not at all, not an inch of space, water. My whole body is drenched and soaked in water. The water gets into your ears and into your nose. When you rush to open your mouth, it flows mercilessly into your mouth as well.

Paul also uses the expression 'drink of the Spirit' here, which is very significant. To be immersed by the Spirit, to drink of the Spirit, in a church that is full of the Spirit. This shows that being connected to the church is not a mere ritual or joining an organisation, nor is it a mechanical joining, but an organic union. The Spirit then enters inwardly, i.e. dwells within, and becomes the strength. That same Spirit also enters into every baptised person and keeps him or her alive with the same life.

Every believer has been baptised into this body, to become, as it were, a part of the body. And every part has its own function, its own function. That is why every believer was given to the church as something to function and work with at the moment of being baptised, i.e. at the moment of experiencing a genuine new birth. They were not baptised to be 'warts', connected to the body but having no function. It never was. It was made part of the body as something that functions and can function from the beginning. True, its function may still be small and weak. But it was added to the Church as something with the potential to function bigger and stronger.

It is unlikely that any evangelist today would deny that every congregation has some gift. But do they realise that all believers are, in fact, not only gifted, but gifted themselves? Many scholars say that apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers or other servants are gifts. That must be a correct understanding of the Bible. If so, then it is not only those who do prominent work and are in prominent positions that are gifts. Paul did not bring in a class A or class B discrimination among believers. He merely listed those that were conspicuous and functionally significant in their ministry, as he thought of them. Therefore, even the smallest and most inconspicuous functionary is a gift.

Therefore, even when seeking a better gift, it is not enough to say, individualistically as before, "God. Give me the gift of healing. We need such and such a person, a man with such and such abilities, a woman with such and such qualities in this church as a community. We need to pray, 'Please give me.

I am not so much interested in how many gifts there are, or how many of the 'nine gifts' there are. Nor am I interested in separating talents from gifts. Nor am I keen on separating natural abilities, abilities acquired through training, supernatural abilities, etc. They consider all human faculties, qualities, possessions, experiences and experiences, i.e. man himself, to be gifts.

We are purchased by the blood of Christ. All of us have been purchased. If a peasant buys a buffalo, he has bought everything about it, its strength, its nature, its body, its flesh, its bones, its horns. If it is a cow, its calf and its milk also belong to the peasant. Even the dung belongs to the peasant. We have been bought by God. Everything about us belongs to God. Not just our minds. Not just our bodies. Not just our abilities. Everything that makes us who we are - our studies, our possessions, our experiences, our experiences, our character, our nature - has become God's. Everything that we were born with, everything that we acquired by training, everything that we acquired by trade - all of these became God's property. And we have been given again as gifts to the Church, the body of Christ.

Every Christian has gifts, and every Christian is a gift. Pastors, evangelists and believers are no different in this respect. But every Christian is a part of the body and cannot alone be the whole body. One person cannot form a church alone. It always needs many companions, many parts. Pastor or no pastor, he alone cannot be the church. For a church to be a church, it must have many congregations, each of which must be exercising its gifts to the full.

God has given us blind people in our churches because there is a work that blind people can do, which neither the pastor nor the elders can do. God gave us a blind man because there is work that a blind man can do that neither the pastor nor the elders can do. A person who constantly disagrees with the pastor's opinion was given because without a person who disagrees, the pastor's opinion always goes through quickly and the work of the church becomes shallow. God gives every believer to the church as a necessary gift. Disagreement. Disagreements of personality. Don't simply kick them out or jump out just because they don't have the same tastes. God has given it to us as a necessary gift.

One church, or what is called a local church, is never a part of the universal church. In other words, that church is not a foot part, this church is a hand part, etc. Essentially, that church is for the rich, this church is for the poor, that church over there is for the educated, this church is for the uneducated, and so on. Of course, there should be no churches exclusively for

Japanese and no churches exclusively for Americans, no churches exclusively for whites and no churches exclusively for blacks.

The local church is not a part of the universal church, but a local expression and local manifestation of the universal church. In other words, a local church is not an expression of a part of the universal church and does not take on some of the work of the universal church. The local church has all the characteristics of the universal church, is entrusted with all its work, and is given the potential to fulfil all of it. That is why God gives all kinds of people to our churches. God gives us all kinds of people: people we don't like, people we hate, people we don't like, people we wouldn't even want to see. They have all been added so that our church can exist properly, as it should, as a local embodiment of the universal church.

I have an 87-year-old grandmother. After a poor girlhood, during which she never ate white rice, she was discovered by a hard-working young man, married and had three boys and two girls. However, her happiness was short-lived when her husband died unexpectedly in an accident at work. She worked like a mad and just when her children were able to support themselves, the war broke out and her three boys were taken away one after the other with red papers and never seen again. Then the war ended. The eldest daughter, who was malnourished and suffering from chest pains, could not afford even a single nourishing food, let alone satisfactory medicines, and there was nothing she could do but watch as she quietly grew cold in her arms. The youngest daughter was the only one left, and just as she was happy that she had finally married happily, she divorced with a baby girl who had not yet been weaned. She started working in the water business, became completely sober, was repeatedly dumped by men and became an alcoholic. Her granddaughter, who is now of age, has lost her way and no longer comes to the house, and is finally missing. Now she is alone in a nursing home, suffering from neuralgia and waiting for death.

Who can speak the gospel to such a grandmother? A pastor with a good sermon? A seminary teacher with a PhD? A young man with a good Bible lecture? No. Maybe it's the grandmother who usually sits quietly in the corner of the church. She doesn't know theology. She doesn't speak well. She can't sing. She can't play an instrument. She can't do anything. But this is the grandmother who knows the grief of losing a child in the war. This is the same grandmother who worked hard with the grief of losing her husband in her heart. She is physically disabled and cannot live a day without the help of others, but she has received salvation and is living out her life with the hope of eternal life. She is the gift that God gave to this church so that it could lead her to salvation. Isn't the grandmother's long experience of suffering and sorrow a

gift and treasure of the church? Is not this grandmother's ability to listen to her story and shed tears of true compassion with her shoulder to shoulder proof that this church exists in the world as a surrogate of Christ who shed tears? Is our church not neglecting such a gift? Have we not forgotten them? Have we not lost sight of them?

The Church is sent as Christ was sent into the world. (John 17:18, 20:21) Its purpose and being correspond to the purpose and being for which Christ was sent. Why did Christ have to take the trouble to be born on earth, to live with people, to suffer and grieve in the same way as they do? Why did He even undergo an unnecessary baptism? It is impossible to know the depths of God's heart. But by doing so, Christ concretely created a common identity with people and became a true and compassionate High Priest.

The gospel was completed through suffering. And this gospel is communicated through the suffering of the Church, the body of Christ. The Church has received not only the salvation of Christ, but also the gift of suffering for Christ's sake. (Philippians 1:29). Just as Christ suffered with the world, so the Church also suffers with the world. Paul found significance in suffering, saying that this suffering of the church was not yet enough, so he was making up for its lack with his own body. (Colossians 1:24)

There are people in the church who are suffering. Some are grieving. The Church, as the body of Christ, as His ambassadors, as His representatives, is to share suffering with the world. The sorrow of a young girl's lost love in the congregation, the frustration of a young man's work, the pain of a parent who has lost a child, the bitter memories of divorce, the loneliness of being abandoned by a parent and forgotten by a child, when they are made the Lord's by redemption and given to the Church, become the gift of the Church, which shares suffering with the world for the Gospel . And through that pain, the Church speaks to those who are in pain, the Gospel completed by pain. That is why the Church is still sent into the world without being admitted into the completed Kingdom, the Kingdom where there is no death, no sorrow, no crying out, no suffering, where tears can be wiped away. If suffering were to disappear from the Church at this time, the Church would cease to be the ambassador and agent of Christ, who was a man of sorrows and knew sickness. Neither the prosperity gospel nor positive thinking is at all aware of this truth.

That is why all believers, small and weak, are all necessary, important parts, indispensable gifts. They have all been given to play a part and to do something, without fail. The important thing is not to see them as useless, but as people who have been endowed with the power to

fulfil, to play an important role. They were only baptised to be a part of the body in the right sense, not to be a 'wart'. They absolutely are not. They must not be treated like 'warts'. They must not be left as 'warts', taking only the nutrients from the body and leaving them as useless to the body as a whole.

Pastors and evangelists often fail to see the power of this congregation and do not even look down their noses at all. At best, they will focus on a few very respectable believers and start with something rude they call training. Why is training rude? The reason is that the training starts from the premise that the laity cannot do it. If you start from the premise that 'the congregation can do it', you don't bring training in the first place. First, you ask the congregation to do the work. They can do it. So we ask them to do it. It is like a parent not wanting to train a baby to walk. They know that a normal baby will stand up and walk when the time is right. Parents continue to believe, hope and encourage the baby to walk. Even if they fall down, bump their forehead or scrape their forehead, they don't panic. Keep encouraging them. Babies are born with great potential.

The problem with our churches today is that there is no example of an active congregation that new believers, born with potential, can see and imitate. No matter how much potential there is, if there is no motivation to discover and use it, it will remain unfulfilled. Often, motivation starts with imitation. If a child is brought up in an environment where everyone plays an instrument and sings, those with great potential in the area of music will immediately start singing and playing an instrument. However, if they grow up in a situation where there are no musical instruments and no one around to sing, no matter how great their musical potential is, it remains unused. And the longer they remain unused, the more they lose their potential. In Jesus' parable, too, the talents that were not used were taken away.

Some time ago, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a very elite school (called MIT), published the results of one study. According to their research, a bee called the bumblebee, ・・・・・・. They are those dark, round bees that gather in large numbers on white clover (white clover) in Hokkaido and elsewhere. It is also known as a bear bee or a kumambachi, and is familiar from Rimsky-Korsakov's song 'The Flight of the Kumambachi'. ・・・・・・ After a detailed study of all parts and functions of this bumblebee, they came to the conclusion that it is aerodynamically incapable of flying. Therefore, a cartoon was published in a famous American newspaper. The bumblebee is flipped over on its back and talking to itself. 'Because MIT says I can't fly ・・・・'.

Having been declared 'flightless' as the result of a study by a super-elite school, the bumblebee, which had been flying freely until now, is now unable to fly. The congregation, which was continually thought to be incapable of doing anything and was not allowed to do anything, became convinced that it could do nothing.

Our San Fernando ministry, now nearly two years old, started with home Bible studies, where we raised up those who were saved in about 40 Bible studies, and those who were saved were made to follow the evangelist or congregational leader to visit houses, witness, speak the Word and participate in the work of organising further Bible studies. It was more than eight months later that the worship meetings began. The first worship meeting was attended by more than 20 people, only 'believers' who had already had a solid salvation experience. For the congregation, it became a normal part of Christian life to be active in this way. Five or six people now have responsibility for two or three Bible study groups each. Some also preach at worship meetings. When I met them the other day, they were excited about preparing a sermon for an outdoor evangelistic meeting. The newborn congregation has been placed in an environment where they can use their potential to grow. It is normal, or normal, in this church for the congregation to do everything, and abnormal for the evangelist to do everything.

The fault of the modern church is that it tries to do too much, whether it is training sessions or study groups. Or rather, they try to do too much and end up not doing it, leaving the congregation untrained and useless. First, you have to get them to actually do something. It's about encouraging them to do and see everything. It's about showing them lots of things to do. The congregation is given talents. Talents are used and increase. They don't increase in training sessions and they don't increase in study groups. Destroy the false myth that if you don't go to training sessions you can't do it. Practice is the best training. You have to repeat the practice many times and experience many failures and successes.

Many years ago, I was invited to a youth group in a church we pioneered early in our ministry and then let go of. I taught a personal evangelism training session. I must have taught a total of 20 hours. Years later, I asked some of the young people who attended the training sessions. How many of you have actually seen personal evangelism in action since then? The answer was, as expected, 'none'. However, not many days later, the pastor of that church was heard talking to the pastors of other churches. 'If you're going to have a personal evangelism training session, we have a number of competent ones in our church who have completed their training and can teach at the training session, so you can lend them out.' Personal evangelism training sessions produce those who can teach at personal evangelism training

sessions, but they do not produce those who do personal evangelism. It's like someone who fails at evangelism, gets discouraged, goes to school, gets a degree, goes back to Bible school and teaches evangelism.

Some time later, he borrowed several other members of the same congregation from the same church every weekend for four months to join him in the pioneering work of opening the aforementioned Bible study in San Fernando. I did not train them, just worshiped and prayed with them and explained the basic ministry. However, they did a fine job of evangelism, opened many home Bible studies and led several people to salvation. Nearly two years later, they are still quite diligent in evangelising, with a 'super lazy' pastor by their side. Pastors and evangelists should be well aware that they are only a small part of the church. Even if they are in leadership positions and have greater gifts, they should bear in mind how small they are compared to the gifts of the whole church. Almost every congregation in the church should know that in certain conditions and with certain kinds of people they can evangelise much more powerfully and effectively than the pastor or even the evangelist.

Let us also use the example of the Baratok church. In this church there was a man in the congregation who was around 30 years of age and very handsome. His hair was dry, his beard was long, his hands were black, his clothes were dirty and shiny, somehow he was always out of tune when he sang, and he was incoherent when he spoke. When he sings, he is always out of tune, and when he speaks, he is incoherent. One day the pastor said to me, "I would like to make this man a lay evangelist ・・・・". I said categorically: 'No, you can't.' I said, "No, you can't." But the pastor caught me off guard and said, 'Who taught that any congregation has potential? Does it not have potential? Is it not a human being? Somewhat overwhelmed and annoyed, I said: 'Well, try it at your own risk. Try it at your own risk, and don't whine about it later".

Three years later, I'm really glad I broke down then. That bitter believer has returned to his hometown, evangelised in his own language and has led many more bitter people to faith than he did. There are 25-30 people at the Sunday service and about 15 at another Friday service; about 90 people a week hear the gospel through his ministry. The people he has led to salvation are a kind of people I could never compete with. Not even a pastor can do it. They are so uneducated, crude, provincial and poor that my theological preaching and the biblical teaching of the pastor are a cakewalk for them. They needed someone who could speak the gospel on their level. If they had regarded that swarthy congregation as useless, they would have lost dozens of people.

Now, having written all this, I was invited by this mumbly lay evangelist to go to his congregational retreat. In fact, it is not an ostentatious retreat, but it is a fine one in its own right. In his house, which was a pile of corrugated tin and not much more than a storage room with lots of gaps, twelve members of the congregation had gathered, each with two or three children. The sight of a mother breastfeeding her baby is beautiful, even if she is not a beautiful woman. ・・・・ According to the story, the congregation has been a bit stagnant recently and the number of people in the congregation has been decreasing a lot. So they asked me for help.

By the way, I made a surprising discovery. The 12 people who had gathered belonged to five different tribes. And to that, in addition, I am a Japanese. It was very difficult for you, my bitter interpreter, to interpret.
It was strange. In the end, I had to interpret into Ilolikino, a language I don't normally use. Surprisingly, the 'arya no nai' could speak four tribal languages and English quite well. Some of the tribesmen had a stand-off, and the oldest attendee, an old woman, looked at me and said, "I hate the Japanese" as if to spit it out. She told me that her husband and two sons had been killed by Japanese soldiers in front of her eyes. In this area, many tragedies were played out between the Japanese soldiers and the local people, who continued to lose and lose. There are several books in Japanese about it. At any rate, this is a bit of a change, as until recently only three tribes were present. It will be interesting to see how this relates to the recent 'stagnation'. However, this could lead to significant growth if done well.

Let's get back on track. A pastor who thinks, "I need to buy reading glasses" cannot effectively evangelise to a girl who is saying, "Hey, I'm happy" or "I'm happy". So God gave the church a group of girls around the same age. Even if they are noisy, noisy and troublesome, and even if they look unreliable, they are the treasures of the church who can do the work of "Pi-zoku" evangelism, which the pastor cannot do.

The single pastor who looks out the window and sighs, "I wonder if there is a devoted woman somewhere who can play the piano, sing and teach the Bible. ・・・・" cannot be a partner for a mother with a son in a motorcycle gang and a daughter who refuses to go to school. So there are a number of 'old ladies' in the congregation who are somewhat talkative, nosy, pushy, shameless, tearful and difficult to deal with. These women are essentially the treasure and gift of the church.

A pastor alone is not enough. That is why there are various people. What happens if the pastor alone does everything? Only those who can put up with him will come to that church. If a pastor who sings in a chanting style always presides and leads the singing, 95% of people today will get fed up and stop coming. Young people will be put off if they have to listen to sermons in a lecture style all the time. If he sings with heavy metal, those who are intoxicated by classical music will stop coming, and if he preaches like a university lecture, the average person will get tired.

No matter how broad a pastor is as a human being, there is always a colour to him. There is upbringing, hometown, education, economic background, political leanings, administrative habits, tastes, personality and preferences. And another kind of person who cannot relate to such a pastor cannot stay in this church. Some have no patience for pastors with thinning, shaggy hair and wander off in search of a pastor who always has a combed nappy. One becomes disillusioned with a pastor whose lower belly is beginning to show, and sets off in search of a pastor with a waist of 70. Some are disappointed by a pastor who wears trousers without knees and whose socks are always slipping down, and others are disgusted by a pastor whose socks are always slipping down, while still others like it that way. A single pastor cannot respond to a diverse public in need of salvation. That is why God has added a wide variety of people as gifts to the church. A diverse congregation should be used in a diverse way, as diverse as it is.

Even in a town with a population of 100,000, the number of people who are satisfied with the humanity of the pastor is very small. Very few, maybe one tenth. For example, if I were to become a pastor, not one person in a thousand would be satisfied with me. If there is only one person in several hundred who can manage to put up with me, then I must be happy with that. Even my wife is in the 'somehow patient' category. So, even if 36% of the population ・・・・・ thought it was OK to be a Christian, even if they thought it was OK to be a Christian, nine-tenths of them would never hear the gospel because the church is not open except on Sundays. Furthermore, the church does not speak the gospel outside the churchyard resemblance, so the remaining one-tenth, nine-tenths of them cannot hear the gospel. This alone brings the number of those who can stay in the church and live the life of the congregation in a town of 100,000 people to only 100, or even 36. If we assume that about 30% of them are children, then the number of adults who could remain in the church would be 24 or 5. But in reality, I don't think there are that many. My calculations are very naive and unrealistic. To reach 25 members in a town of this size would take five years at best, ten years at most, maybe even 20 years. It could take as long as 20 years.

So, at all costs, we need the congregation to work. Not just cleaning, tract distribution, printing, evangelism committee or board meetings, but real evangelism and pastoral work. We need them to start their own pioneering evangelism, to build their own congregations, to take care of their own people, to work in more and more places, at more and more different times, for more and different people. The musty tradition of one church, one church hall, one pastor and one worship assembly must be abandoned. One church may have as many as five church buildings, or none at all. It should just consist of many different congregations.

All the churches in the New Testament were like that. The church in Jerusalem, which probably numbered in the tens of thousands according to modern church attendance counts, but which could not have a synagogue, would have consisted of at least 100 congregations, although they used ordinary houses for meetings. Both the church in Ephesus and the church in Rome were made up of quite a few congregations. Therefore, there were naturally a number of pastors. They were usually called elders or overseers. So there were many worship meetings and they probably met when it was most convenient for each of them. Then some congregations would be more educated, and other congregations would be more physical workers. This congregation was made up of old men who could growl out poetry; that group was made up of older men who beat the drums with their zu-da-da-da-da-don-don and women who scratched the electric guitar with their chur-chur-chur-chur-chur, and the other group was made up of glasses-wearing men who worked on the original Bible at the mercy of their lexicographers. The colour of each naturally emerges. All these people belong to one church. So this church transcends the barriers of difference and breaks Peter Wagner's myth of uniformity.

Let's also talk about the Baratok church. Just to give you a quick count, there are people in this church who belong to ten different tribes. Some of them are very tribal and many of them are mutually exclusive. They have very different languages, customs, education, economic status and social status. Normally, it would be almost impossible for a church to include such a diverse range of people. And the church must remain small forever. What made the Baratok church possible? It is the result of gratefully accepting different kinds of Christians as gifts and allowing them to work freely with their gifts. In the beginning, they could not do much because of the fresh excitement of being saved, but they always followed the pastor, imitated him, and gradually became able to do things on their own. Then the next saved person started imitating them. And soon they became more than mere imitators. That is all there is to it. Each member of the congregation began to make use of their own characteristics and started

to do what they could do, and the right person for each became saved. In the beginning, it seemed very difficult to unite as one church, but as each grew in faith, they began to come together beyond their differences. Several times a year, the whole congregation gathers in one place for a festive Thanksgiving Fellowship Service. Lots of pigs and chickens are slaughtered, sometimes dogs are added, and a feast is served.

The congregation is asked to work. However, the work of the congregation is never the pastor's help. From the beginning, it is the work of the congregation. It is the work of the congregation because it is the work of the church. The term 'mobilising the congregation' is used. I know what you mean, but it is wrong. The congregation is not to be mobilised. To mobilise is not inherently moving, not working, not participating. So it is that they must be mobilised. Who has put the congregation in a state where it has to mobilise, and who is doing so? The congregation was originally baptised into the church as something that moves around from the beginning, something that is active and does not stay, something that has a role, responsibility and capacity for activity.

It is the Holy Spirit who has baptised, and it is a sovereign act of God. The Holy Spirit, without a word of consultation or refusal from the pastor, "on his own initiative", by his own deep will, has baptised into your church people who are so far below the level of the church as to be considered by the pastor, and who would make the board members ashamed of themselves. Is that a thankless inconvenience? Pastors want to ignore such congregations. The board secretly wishes they would go away.

Still, a serious pastor will try to train even such a helpless congregation and make them useful. However, when they 'train' them before allowing them to work freely, they tend to push the congregation into a set of rules about the pastor and church traditions, and prevent them from doing the work that God had planned for them from the beginning. God has prepared a thousand different gifts, but churches are killing them off one by one by trying to squeeze them into a handful of clichéd ministry slots.

What pastors and evangelists need to do is not to give by training gifts that the congregation does not have. In other words, it is not about forcing through training the gifts that are convenient for the modern church system and administration or the pastor's view of pastoral care, but which God has not been willing to give. It is first to discover what their gifts are by finding out what the congregation is free to do and having them do it freely, and then to refine those, 'their gifts'. In Ephesians 4:12, the ministry of evangelists, pastors, etc. is described as

'equipping' the saints, but this Greek word translated 'equipping' does not mean to prepare, equip or give. The word was originally used by surgeons to heal broken bones. When Christ invited the fishermen on the shores of Lake Galilee, the hunters were mending their torn nets, which is the same word as 'mend'. In Japanese, the word is 'mend'. In some English translations, the work of pastors and evangelists is translated as 'equipping', which is bad. Their work is to 'furnish', 'repair', 'mend' and 'prepare' what is already there to make it better, not to provide, equip and give what is not there. You cannot furnish, prepare and repair what you do not have without first finding out what you do have. Therefore, even new and unhelpful believers are to be trusted as those to whom God has given gifts, and as the gifts themselves, and first of all, they are to be given work to do.

Personally, I feel that the translation 'adjust' is the most appropriate for this passage. However, it is a somewhat mechanical word and does not fit in with the living body of Christ, but it fits in terms of meaning. The role of pastors and evangelists is to adjust all parts of the body one by one, so that the body as a whole can serve in the best possible condition.

The key is trust. Happy are those who are trusted. And they strive to live up to that trust. If you cannot trust, trust not the person, but the Holy Spirit who has baptised the person. The pastor should trust the congregation, knowing that they are not trustworthy and will always fail and make mistakes. Do not trust the congregation completely. They are just as untrustworthy as you, the pastor, and I, the missionary. That is where you dare to trust them.

It was Christ who set the example of this important human relationship. Christ knew that all human beings are untrustworthy, and He knew that His disciples would eventually betray Him. He knew and trusted. He knew that you and I are not trustworthy, but He trusted us and set us up as evangelists, pastors and missionaries. He trusted the church, a gathering of untrustworthy people, and entrusted it with the work of redemption that He accomplished at the cost of His own life. If you still cannot trust the congregation, trust the Holy Spirit who lives in them.

Filipino pastors are good preachers. But I complain about pastors who preach too well. 'No, you can't. If you preach that well. Look at them. Look at them, they're so impressed, they're completely satisfied. A really good sermon is not one that impresses or satisfies people, but one that motivates them to think, 'I could do that,' or 'I can't leave it to my pastor, so I'll do my best ・・・・' or 'Okay, I'll preach one. Those who hear your sermon will say, 'Oh, no, a man like us can't preach that well. They feel, 'I'll leave the preaching to the pastor,' or, 'Even

with such a great sermon, not many people get saved, so it doesn't matter if I preach. No matter how bad a sermon is, if it wakes up another preacher, it is a great sermon. A good sermon is a sermon that is not good, and even if the sermon itself and the preacher are forgotten, the content of the sermon remains in the mind, capturing, moving and remaking people. These days preaching is more about making people feel the preacher than the sermon itself.

The pastor's job is not to do the work himself, but to develop the congregation into people who can do the work. A pastor who can do everything well and cannot get his congregation to do the work is not a pastor but a scullery maid. As a missionary, my desire is not to accomplish a great work by myself and be remembered by the people as a great missionary. I don't care if I am forgotten or remembered as an incompetent missionary. Just to raise up better workers than I am. Raise up missionaries who will overcome me.

Whenever you start evangelising, the church will grow. It has little to do with the efforts of the pastor to study, get a degree, raise the standard, etc., but the church grows.

I like fishing. I have heeded the advice of many grateful senior missionaries that missionaries need rest, that they are always on the edge, and that if they don't have a moment of spiritual release, they will fall off the wagon. I still don't feel the need to rest as much as some of my predecessors, who go out to play golf until Sunday morning service time, but compared to many Japanese pastors who work 365 days a year without a break, it is a gracious life. Even so, the local evangelists, many of whom are 'lazy', say I work too much and are more than happy when I go out to play. In this country, there are many pastors who take holidays every year, some for as long as a month, only to return to find that their church has gone out of business, or that they have been dismissed and a new pastor, whom they do not know, is now working there. Such tragedies are repeated without any sexual repercussions.

Most of the time, I only go fishing for 'kisu' because there are no good fishing spots, but if I am in good shape, I catch 40-50 fish that are in good shape and return home. My wife doesn't like to handle fish, so we usually end up pleasing our lazy male cat. My wife, who grew up in Tokyo, seems to have thought that fish were swimming around filleted. When we stayed in

Kitakyushu for a short while, I told her that the fish here was fresh and tasty, and she bought some sanma for that evening.
For those of you who, like my dear wife, don't know much about fish, Akitai fish is a cold-water fish, and the best ones are from Hokkaido to Sanriku. It can be eaten as far as the Boso Peninsula. The akitou fish from the Genkai Sea, near Kitakyushu, is not even eaten by cats. In July, the only akitogi available are frozen salted akitogi. It is not something you would eat in Kitakyushu on purpose.

When fishing, neighbourhood children always come up to me and start fishing with me. They are envious of the Japanese-made rods and spinning reels, which are a rarity in this part of the world. After all, the twisted, knotty local bamboo is the only rod they know. I attach a gilet balance to it and show them how it can fly over 100 metres. Then I reel in the stunned children.

It's a wonder that the Japanese are so fascinated with kisu fishing when they have such amazing equipment. After all, kisu is the cheapest fish around here. After repeating this, I felt a burden from the people in this area and finally did pioneer evangelism. The work is still going on.

I don't want to say that, but rather that I think I'm a good fisherman. I "always" catch more fish than the neighbourhood children, at least. However, the neighbourhood children fish every day. I would like to do it every day, but if I become that lazy, I can't show my face to the Japanese Christians who believe that "He is working for the Lord with great hardship in the unreached land of the Philippines" and have donated money to me, so I moderate my fishing. So, in the end, the people who are catching more fish are not the missionaries who are good fishermen with advanced Japanese-made tools, who have taken the trouble to go out to second-hand bookshops and read enthusiast books they have found and are passionate about improving their fishing, but the people who live so close to the sea that they have to come out to the sea at least once a day, if not more, to defecate. They are children from the coast who live so close to the sea that they have to come out to the sea to defecate at least once a day, and who devote themselves to fishing every day.

No matter how good you are at preaching and how good you are at evangelism, you can only catch so many fish in a week.
The number of fish that can be caught is limited. You need to increase the number of times you fish. As the saying goes, "Even a poor shot will hit a few." I'll always be there to teach you.

The secret to catching kisu is to go where the kisu are. You don't need much skill to catch a carp. Unless the conditions are very bad, you can drop a bait where the yakko are and invite them to come and take a bite. However, kisu fish do not form large schools. Therefore, in order to catch a large number of kisu, you must keep moving and quickly strike a place where several kisu are rendezvousing. Once you catch one, you can usually catch several more in the same place.

The Japanese church style of kisu fishing is to sit back and relax. Japanese churches sit in their churches and wait for the fish to come to them. This method is not expected to produce a big catch. And if you are fishing for kisu, waiting for the kisu to bite on the shore is no different from waiting for a monkey to drown on the beach. You can't just wait for the fish to come. Let's go out to where the fish are. Let's evangelise everywhere.

The local children, by the way, never get tired of fishing every day. It's not that they don't have anything else to do. Their fishing is not a hobby or a pastime like mine, but a practical pursuit. My parents and older brothers and sisters usually go out to sea and catch big fish, which are important for sale and rarely go into their own mouths. The fishermen's families eat the small fish that their children catch on the beach. So fishing for children is not a game. But it is not work either. Even children would be miserable if they had to fish for 'work' day in and day out. But if they were to do this every day just for 'fun', they would have become stupid long ago. It's not play, it's not work, it's going on forever. All the children do it. In short, it is part of life. So, naturally, a lot of fish are caught.

Churches are also miserable because they only do "work" evangelism, such as evangelistic meetings, tract distribution, Sunday school, preaching, etc., which is not effective. Of course, there are fewer participants. The church as a whole, that is, each member of the congregation, should and can do non-work evangelism in their daily lives. It would be good if the gospel could be spoken of as a very natural chat. Inevitably, more believers will join the evangelisation, more people will hear the gospel and more people will be saved. Let anyone be able to evangelise. To enable anyone to evangelise does not mean to train 'anyone' so that they cease to be 'anyone', in other words, by changing them into something splendid, but to change the church so that anyone can evangelise as they are, as they are. Let anyone be able to evangelise.

Evangelism for 'anything'

If the church started evangelising anytime, anywhere, anyone, would it necessarily grow more? I can't guarantee that. I am not trying to say that this will always happen in every case. I am trying to say that it is a matter of common sense, of probability, of arithmetic. It is more likely to happen twice a week than once a week. Three places are more likely to have more contacts than one. It is obvious that five people fishing together catch more fish in total than one person, not more.

This is very well understood by first-graders, but rarely understood by 'pastor-teachers' who have been trained in theology and biblical studies. I know that I shouldn't expect the "solid congregations" trained by these teachers to understand it either, but I keep on writing. One way or another, this is an outlet for frustration. So, it is a nuisance to those who have accidentally started reading this. However, since you have gone this far, I would like to ask you for a little more. Even a dog walks and hits a stick. Something good may happen.
You never know.

Anytime, anywhere, by anyone alone, the church changes considerably. But I would like to add one more thing. I prefer four-beat music with stability to three-beat music, which is kind of a stumbling block, so I'd like to add one more to the three - here, anytime, anywhere, anyone - and make it four-beat.

It is 'anything'. We will do anything to evangelise. It is a matter of course, not something to be shouted down or pretended to be something big. However, if you actually take this seriously, it is a terrible thing. How do churches evangelise today? First of all, 95% is through preaching. Film evangelism and music evangelism are somewhat different from what I am talking about here. What I mean here is that evangelism involves clearly communicating the content of the gospel. Film and music are hardly evangelism because they are entertainment. They are a means of recruiting people to listen to 'unattractive' sermons that they want to hear. The hook is the bait hidden inside. It is the bait of a bad fisherman. It is an angler's lantern.

Churches try at all costs to get people to come and listen to their sermons, because they have to get people to come to the synagogue.
They try to attract people at all costs and come up with all kinds of entertainment. And as long as they invite people, they have to give them a welcome and hospitality that is not embarrassing. It has to be better than what theatres, restaurants, dance halls, parties and entertainment venues can offer. The effort is immense, and the money spent on it is nothing

to sneeze at. This is all because people want to hear the sermons.

The church is not trying to communicate the gospel in any other way than through preaching. It has been preaching for a hundred years and a day. Is the preaching method so important and inseparable from Christianity? Is the gospel not the gospel if it is not preached by preaching? How many pastors and evangelists have considered the effectiveness of preaching as a means of communication? How seriously have they considered it?

One need not study pedagogy to realise that even a cursory glance at Sunday school teaching clearly shows how ineffective the 'talk' method is. Every schoolteacher knows that the 'lecture' method of teaching is the easiest, but least effective method of transmission and should not be used too often.

Nevertheless, 'lectures' are still better than 'sermons'. Lectures are usually given by people with the same interests, the same objectives and the same level of understanding, who follow the lecture notes and write them down in a ledger. In most cases, questions are allowed. The lecturer can focus on what he or she wants to convey, set the level, and get a solid response from the audience through questions and answers. It is an easy job.

But what about preaching? Preachers have a 'tremendous' capacity. In the audience there are children as young as three and elderly people as old as 83. There are people who mistake Genesis for Soul Sage, and even a congregation with the usefulness of a living concordance. On the other side, there are those who, plagued by a sense of guilt, are dating young unbelievers and having premarital sex with them. On the other side, there are the sisters who are tormented by guilt, dating a young man who is not a believer and are forced to have premarital sex with him. There are middle-aged brothers who struggle with the loneliness of living alone. All of these people are taken care of in a single sermon a week. He is no match for the Imperial Japanese Army doctor, who said that he had cured stomachaches, headaches, malaria and amoebic dysentery all with toothpaste. However, the toothpaste really did cure the disease. Come to think of it, there are some truly grateful believers who can be comforted and their worries disappear if they see their pastor's face. ・・・・・・・

One of my seniors told me a story. After the service, a middle-aged woman who was attending for the first time came to me and said, "Sir. Thank you very much for your wonderful sermon today". During the sermon, the pastor noticed that she was listening attentively, as if she was completely impressed, so he asked her with his usual enthusiasm, even though he

should not have done so. What did you like about it? The pastor noticed that she was very impressed and asked with her usual enthusiasm, when she should not have asked him. This pastor was troubled by the fact that for some reason he could only 'smile' all the time, sometimes being told he was 'smiling' and other times being told he was 'not listening to others seriously'. Glad the 'smirking' helped, but on this occasion he preached about sin and judgement.

There are people who come to church to have their problems solved, and they come prepared to have their problems solved, so they leave with their problems solved, regardless of the content of the pastor's sermon.

If lectures are not very effective in communicating, then sermons are even less effective. Therefore, preachers make tearful efforts to attract and impress their audiences somehow. They try Rakugo, Manzan, Kodan, Nankyoku, Kengeki, Shinpa, Shinkokugeki, Kabuki and Takarazuka styles. If that doesn't work, try election speeches, aiding and abetting, fish market and banana-selling.

In Japanese, 'sermon' and 'evangelism' are clearly distinguished and there is no confusion, but in English both are often expressed with the word 'preach', which is troublesome for those unfamiliar with English. The biblical act of 'preaching the word' is definitely not the same as 'preaching'. I don't know the deeper meaning of the English word 'preach', but it usually sounds somewhat like 'speaking out'. The Japanese word 'preach' has the Japanese feature of combining two verbs with different meanings and using them as a single verb, and includes the act of 'conveying' rather than 'telling'. Which translation is closer to the original language is probably English, and Japanese has 'reading'. However, I imagine that if Christ had spoken in Japanese, He would not have said "speak", "state" or "proclaim" the gospel, but "speak" or "proclaim" it.

According to John Stott, who is quite popular among Japanese people, evangelism is the very act of "proclaiming" the gospel, nothing more, so we don't have to worry so much about whether it is "communicated" or not, in other words, whether it is communicated or not. Whether the hearers understand or not, accept or reject, if you say what you want to say, you have evangelised. This is the perfect theology for traditional 'preaching'. Evangelism as taught in the Bible is not just the act of speaking the gospel. Stott's opinion takes only two of the many words in the Bible that have to do with evangelism - the words translated as 'gospel' and 'proclamation' - and from there defines evangelism as the proclamation of the gospel, which

is wild and is something a scholar should not do.

Evangelism is first of all communicating the gospel. It should be firmly understood by those who are listening, and then they should decide whether to accept or reject it. Evangelism is like distributing nutritious food to people suffering from famine. It is not enough to just throw nutritious food to people who are starving. It should be passed from hand to hand so that they can receive it properly and without fail. Not only that, they should be told how good the food is, shown how to eat it, warned not to overeat and helped to eat it. There was a tragedy when relief workers inadvertently gave out powdered milk, which was given to babies unintentionally by mothers who knew nothing about it, causing a great many needless deaths. The gospel must be spoken so that it can be understood and accepted. I am not suggesting that we remove the 'stumbling block' nature of the gospel itself. I am saying give the gospel a chance to stumble.

People have stumbled into evangelism only on Sundays, only in church halls, only in pastors, and they have no opportunity to hear the gospel. So they cannot stumble over the gospel. Those who did not stumble on Sunday stumble on the church hall, those who did not stumble on the church hall stumble on the pastor, and those who did not stumble on the pastor, they come here, they stumble on the sermon, and they have no opportunity to stumble on the gospel. At the very least, they should be evangelised in a way that makes them stumble over the gospel itself.

Many Protestant churches make preaching very, very, very "stuffy". Most churches have a pulpit in the front centre of the synagogue. This is to show the face of the Bible-centred Protestantism by placing the lectern, a symbol of God's word, in the middle, whereas the ritual-centred Catholic church places the sacrament table in the centre.

It is natural and historically inevitable that the Protestant pioneers, who stood up against the corrupt Catholic Church of their time with God's Word, the Bible, valued preaching. They fought with the Bible and nourished their congregations with the Bible. However, the vital Bible was very scarce. It is true that the printing press was invented at this time and the first Bibles were printed, but not enough for the general public to have access to. The Bible was literally 'chained' to the pulpit. Moreover, very few people could read and write. Under these conditions, the only way for the general public to have access to the Bible was to go to the church hall on Sundays when it was a holiday and listen to the words of the 'Bible' being preached by the 'clergy'.

In this tradition, therefore, expository teaching, based on a more faithful interpretation of God's word, was naturally emphasised. However, this expository teaching is a tricky thing, and if one is not careful, it can become the most difficult and tasteless, a substitute for sleeping pills for the faithful and as inaccessible as a skunk's fart for the uninitiated.

I believed in the importance of preaching. In particular, I did not doubt the supremacy of lectio divina. That is why my early sermons were exclusively expository. From a sermonological point of view, my sermons then were much better than they are now. I have not made any serious sermons in the last 20 years, because I have not made any serious sermons. My wife has never seen me at my desk trying to work out a sermon. For I have fallen into preaching slump, and then into preaching distrust. Of course, now that I am responsible for about 50 pioneer and semi-pioneer churches, I am often called to 'preach'. I am also invited by surrounding churches. However, I try as much as possible not to preach. Instead, I chat. I talk with the congregation. Naturally, I enjoy it more when there are fewer people. Even if there are 500 people, I still basically talk to them as if I were talking to one person. So those who are listening ask questions, and I answer them. I also ask questions. Answers come back.

In many cases, meetings are held in private homes or in the open air, so there is no platform. There is no extra distance between me and the listeners. I try to pay attention to my hearers, to speak in a way that they can understand, that I can respond to their needs, that I can adapt my talk to their level, their life and their culture, in other words, to 'communicate' the gospel, rather than focusing on the subject, content, structure, rhetoric, etc., which tend to forget the hearers. Be prepared to 'communicate' the gospel. If you are called to a new place or a new church, go a few hours early and drive around the town. Then get out of the car and look around on your own. Usually I go to the market and see the people. And get to know the town and its people. If possible, talk to some people. Then go to the churchyard and chat with the congregation. Then you talk to the pastor and his wife. The meeting starts, there are songs, testimonies and prayer requests. They are all important information in determining the subject matter, content, trend and level of my talk. In my case, the subject matter and everything else is often decided after I start speaking.

I don't mean to tell other pastors and evangelists to do the same. But this is my way of evangelising and communicating the gospel after I fell into preaching disbelief. So far, it is going surprisingly well. The English word for preaching is 'homiletics', which originally comes

from the Greek word 'homily', meaning 'conversation'.

It is clear how important 'preaching' was during the Reformation. But now, nearly five centuries later, the situation has changed. Things have changed. Whereas in the past no one had a Bible, now everyone has one. A small congregation has about five copies. In Japan, for example, almost everyone can read the Bible for themselves. With just a little effort, believers can have many opportunities to read and study the Bible. If churches actively create such opportunities, there will be no need for lectures. If the congregation has other opportunities to read and study the Bible, the sermon in the worship service should be a sermon on the subject. Short is good. Fifteen minutes at most. Forget the tiresome original languages and exegesis, it should be a powerful exhortation, a bloody consolation, a clear presentation of a vision, an exhortation to intense repentance. Then there will be more time. That allows more time for worship praise, prayer and fellowship.

I am an insolent person who hates preaching, but I hate listening to sermons even more. Unless it is a very dynamic sermon, or a rakugo or comic sermon, I usually fall asleep. I am not an active person, but I cannot stand boredom during the sermon. The first time I went to church, an American woman missionary was preaching on 'the serpent that was lifted up...'. For more than an hour, I sat on a tatami mat with a tatami cushion that was falling apart, and I kept regretting that I had ever attended church. I looked down and saw that there were several hard knots in the small tassel-like binding threads at the four corners of the zabuton. The cushions next to me were the same. The hands of the women, completely bored with the sermon, must have done this unintentionally. It was not through the sermon that I was saved.

'What man in his right mind can sit still and listen to another man for an hour? It is not unusual for a husband to be driving his wife and children to and from church while he is playing pachinko himself. One time, I met a truly amazing loving wife and faithful 'prisoner' who was sitting in his car parked in front of the church, smoking 11 and a half cigarettes and waiting for his wife to come out of the church hall. When I spoke to him, I was even more surprised, astonished, impressed, marvelled and moved. I was almost in tears. They have been doing the same thing every week for over a year now. When I asked him, "Wouldn't it be easier if you went in and rested?" he replied, "Oh no. I'm not good at preaching. In the end, we talked about Christ and the state of faith for about half an hour until his wife came out. He, too, is a hardcore sermon hater. But it's not that he hates Christ.

Many of our churches are troubled by the overwhelming number of women. The truth is

that we are not in trouble because there are too many women. We are troubled because there are so few men, and so many women are forced to believe that it is their "will" to remain celibate for the rest of their lives. At least part of the reason for this lies in the "preachy" form of the church.

I am not a psychologist, so I can't say with certainty that women are more religious than men. However, I think that women and men differ in what I would call the depth of their religious consciousness. In the consciousness of all human life, in the case of women, the religious consciousness is quite close to the surface, while in the case of men it is quite deep. Or it might be better to say that in the case of men, the religious sense is overshadowed by the various matters of everyday life. In the case of women, the religious sense is quite exposed. Therefore, most religious organisations have more female than male members. In particular, most Christian churches are not able to evangelise in a lived, everyday matter that reaches deep into personal life. They are either horribly academic, detached from real life, or they are detached from everyday life, in a special religious atmosphere created by the worship service.

The 'preaching' method adds to this tendency. For most people, preaching is just another 'religious ritual to be endured' that has nothing to do with the harsh realities of the floating world. No matter how profound the 'sutras' given by monks may be, for modern people they are no different from 'religious duties to be endured'. This method of evangelisation cannot reach men's religious consciousness. It only scratches the surface.

Where did we, as pastoral evangelists, come up with the idea of preaching as the most important thing next to life? It is true that there is something like it in the Bible. The Bible expositions in the synagogues are a good example of this. However, both Christ's sermons and those of his disciples are somehow different from modern sermons. They were not, like modern sermons, hours long and preachologically prepared, but were spoken extemporaneously in response to the situation on the spot. In other words, there was an element of 'conversation' regardless of the subject spoken of. It was not a one-way conversation, as in the case of sermons, but a two-way exchange of ideas. Sermons in those days were indeed 'homilies', an extension of conversation.

The reason why preaching became an eloquence based on the assumption that there was a listening public, as is the case today, is apparently because Christianity became the state religion of Rome, Sundays were declared a holiday, and the state's dignified halls were built, and people, whether they were true Christians or not, simply did so because it was in many

ways more advantageous to do so. It seems to have begun when people flocked to church halls in droves, regardless of whether they were true Christians or not, simply because it was advantageous in many ways to do so. In other words, it is a bad tradition that has arisen from a place where the original meaning of evangelism and worship has been sacrificed.

Luther, who dreamed of a house church away from the main hall but was unable to fulfil his dream, or perhaps he was thinking of more 'conversational' preaching.
preaching. Whereas the giants of the Reformation, such as Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, failed to be truly biblical in several respects, it was the Anabaptists who tried to be thoroughly biblical in every respect. There were a few who went a little off the rails, but they were the few in the history of Christianity who tried to be thoroughly biblical in every way. Many traditional churches, or those with traditional theology, who do not like to be thoroughly biblical, try to bury them as 'radicals' or 'extremists', but anyone who wants to be truly biblical should follow their example. Salvation by definite conversion, a church made up only of those who have experienced definite salvation, separation of church and state, etc., which are taken for granted and accepted in our churches today, are important legacies left by these men, along with the 'immersion' that follows conversion. And 'conversational' preaching was much used among them.

As a matter of fact, they were the ones who practised anything, anyone, anytime, anywhere to some extent. However, because they were biblical, they experienced the most intense persecution in the history of Christianity. Moreover, most of the persecution was from the Christian churches - Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Twinglish, and Anglican. It is a pity that after they escaped persecution and came to America, they somehow fell into a small communitarianism and there is not much to take up in terms of mission, but only recently there has been a movement among them to regain their original nature. I personally have great expectations for them. There are also several groups working in Japan, but I am more interested in the small flock struggling in eastern Hokkaido.

Even as I say this, I am anticipating "to some extent" a modern witch-hunt, a mini-Mini-Modern version of the persecution that the Anabaptists went through. Nevertheless, it must be said. The church, the body of Christ, absolutely needs a radical part. I will go on a rampage to keep it from falling into arteriosclerosis. That is my role.

What I say is radical. It is radical for the modern church, which is conservative at every turn when it comes to the Bible. To be conservative about the Bible is to be radical about the

modern church. I have no doubt in my mind that if my own organisation, for example, which is struggling with an attendance of about 5,000, would take what I am about to say in this essay seriously and put it into practice, it would reach about 20,000 in ten years' time. In the following 10 years, it will be 50,000 or so.

I am not talking about catching a cloud. I am not like the evangelical 'bluffers' who are talking about 10 million saved souls without any concrete measures. However, they are not as superhuman as the Korean Pentecostal teachers who are calling for the 'salvation of 10 million Japanese'.

By the way, have you heard about the rapid growth of the organisation 'The Spirit of Jesus Order'? Although the majority of churches want nothing to do with this organisation, and it appears that this organisation also does not want to negotiate with other churches, I personally have been keeping an eye on it for the last 15 years. I will leave the detailed discussion of whether this church is 'heretical' for another time, but there are Pentecostal and charismatic churches all over the world with this degree of 'heresy'.

I cannot say with absolute certainty, as I have been away from Japan for a long time and have been wanting to do more serious research at some point, but have not yet been able to fulfil it, but there are methodological lessons to be learned from this organisation. According to the data at hand, this organisation was founded in 1941. The founder, Director Murai, used to work together with the people who were active in the early days of the organisation to which I belong. However, they apparently parted company because of problems such as baptism for the dead, the need to be baptised in the Holy Spirit with tongues to be saved, and a lack of clarity on the idea of the Trinity. So those in our organisation do not deal with them. Or rather, they have an attitude of 'God willing, we won't touch them'. I have interpreted it as follows: our organisation, which is desperate to be recognised by the Christian community, has no good things to do with such a "fishy" organisation..... But you know what? Even the churches that are recognised by themselves and others as traditional and orthodox Christian churches have been holding on to a very stale theology, a false theology from a time when biblical theology had not been developed, as tradition.....excuse me ・・・・ Even the ludicrous theology of the Jesus' Spirit cult is a small matter compared to the Catholic theology of Mary, the theology of deeds and the theology of priests. The aforementioned Stott, who seems to be one of the leading evangelical theologians in the world today, is trying very hard to join hands with the Catholics. Have they joined hands with the Catholics yet?
Even the attitude of those who identify themselves as being at the heart of Protestant theology

and who value the Westminster Confession of Faith more than the Bible is sufficiently 'anti-biblical'.

So ・・・・ back to the half of the story: ・・・・・ The Spirit of Jesus Order was already the third largest Protestant organisation in 1965, with 28,000 members; in 1976 it was the second largest, with 85,669 members, after the Christian Church of Japan; in 1976 it was the second largest Protestant organisation, after the Christian Church of Japan, with 85,669 members, after the Christian Church of Japan. In 1986 it had 376,618 members, almost twice as many as the Nippon Churches, and is on the verge of overtaking the Catholic Church, and may well have done so by the end of 1988 as I write. (However, the membership of the Order of the Spirit of Jesus is very different from the way we count our own congregations, so these figures cannot be taken on faith. Apparently they perform baptisms for the dead and add them to their membership figures. (So this number should be estimated at less than half, or about one-fifth, maybe even one-tenth.)

We often talk about the largest church in the world in neighbouring South Korea. For some reason ・・・・ also a bad word ・・・・・・ we speak of it with some pride, because that church belongs to the same fellowship as ours. But even if that church had 600,000 members in 1986, it pales in comparison to the growth of the Spirit of Jesus cult (even if their actual number is less than 40,000, one tenth of the announced number ・・・・). Christianity has always been strong in South Korea. In the last 20 years or so, the Christian population has grown from around 10% of the population to over 25% and is now approaching 30%. In such an environment of rapid growth of the Christian world as a whole, 600,000 people, and more than 30,000 people in Japan, which is around 1% of the population, you know.

What is very interesting from a missionary point of view is that the Spirit of Jesus Order has received almost no foreign aid, both in terms of human resources and economics.
The Spirit of Jesus Church is a near purely indigenous church "of the Japanese, by the Japanese and for the Japanese", which has received little, perhaps no, foreign assistance, both in human and economic resources.
The Church of the Holy Spirit of Jesus is a purely indigenous church "of the Japanese, by the Japanese and for the Japanese", which has received little, perhaps no, foreign assistance in terms of human resources and economy. The tendency towards syncretism, a common weakness of indigenous churches, is also present here, but its strengths are fully demonstrated. It is not difficult to imagine that the tendency towards syncretism, in this case baptising the dead, is in line with the Japanese spiritual climate and works to the advantage of evangelism,

but the real, or rather greater, secret of their growth lies elsewhere. That is what I am trying to say now: evangelism anytime, anywhere, to anyone, to anything.

They were not as thorough as I am mainly emphasising, but they were those who practised this anytime, anywhere, anyone, anything evangelism quite faithfully. They seldom have anything that looks like a church building, most of their activities are carried out at 'home', they do their work in just three months instead of Bible school (I don't know if this is still the case nowadays, but it used to be so), they don't make a fuss about the Great Mission or Crusade, they avoid attention quietly and 'respectably' do it. We are doing it quietly, avoiding attention, and doing it 'honorably'. Our organisation, which started evangelising around the same time, received many missionaries from the USA, UK, Canada and Australia and a lot of financial support, established a three-year Bible school (now four years), built a church building, distributed leaflets, put up placards, blew trumpets, beat drums, got on the radio, went on TV and started to do a lot of work. I have been on the radio, on TV, and have been evangelising in a spectacular and lively way. Some of my predecessors have even been doctors. And with a total congregation of less than 10,000, 60% of whom are active members, that's good enough for me.

However, there are others above me. A group that is growing more rapidly (though not as rapidly as I would like to claim) and more thoroughly anytime, anywhere, anyone, anything is the Kuhovah's Witnesses. They, in contrast to the Spirit of Jesus cult, are doing so much with 128% buttery imported theology and practice all the way up there. It is also very important to study cultural anthropology and sociology, and to evangelise while thinking about the spiritual climate and faith of the Japanese people, which can be very troublesome and complicated. That is my area as a missionary. However, this example clearly shows that the way the church should be is much more important. However, theirs is not so much evangelism as brainwashing, and cannot simply be compared to the kind of evangelism I am trying to describe now. However, what I am trying to say is that evangelism in Japan is possible, and very possible. However, with the way the church is now, it is absolutely, another big plus, absolutely impossible.

Now, I've gone on and on digression after digression, and I've completely lost track of what I'm saying. Let's get back to where we started. I was talking about 'preaching'. Anyway, preaching as a means of communicating the gospel is terribly ineffective.

For a while, the Baratoc church had been trying to evangelise by preaching as well as by

meeting like a normal church. What became clear was that the growth in faith of believers saved and nurtured by preaching was much slower than the growth in faith of those saved and nurtured in small, discussion-based meetings held at home and elsewhere. In fact, it is because of this fact that ministers who had been educated in the belief that 'preaching is the only way' and blindly believed in the power of the sermon have 'turned the other way'.

Our churches are full of malnourished, underdeveloped, baby congregations, 10, 20, 30 years old, who don't understand anything, who are put down by three-month-old Jehovah's Witnesses and lag behind two-month-old Unification Church 'mouthpieces', every time. Why? Why? Why? Because the pastors are preaching all the time. Because they don't teach people to read the Bible for themselves. Because they don't teach people to try to understand it for themselves. Because they don't know that the Holy Spirit works when people come together to read the Bible, discuss it prayerfully and exchange ideas. It is impossible to meet the needs and standards of the congregation with guesswork preaching. It is impossible to respond to the needs of an old believer who is about to leave this world today and tomorrow, and a happy young couple with a two-year-old child in the middle of them, all at once.

There is no 'life' in the pastor's sermon. It is an imposition of one-sided "assumptions". It is more sane to dream of babies growing up on soft drinks than to expect congregations to grow up in a sane way with such 'sermons'. No subject. No assembly. No plot. Incoherence with a series of digressions. Even with the dragon's head and tails of gobbledygook, there is life and theology in the impromptu discussions around the Bible. Above all, it arouses a heart to read and understand the Bible and a congregation to talk about it. Preaching is like spoon-feeding a wrongly prepared food. Discussion is teaching people to cook their own food and eat it themselves.

A congregation does not grow up through training sessions and seminars, but through imitation. It is like a small child. An ordinary baby will try to stand up and walk at the age of one. However, if there is no one around them who is standing and walking, they will not try to stand. There is no role model. In other words, there is no example to imitate. The believers are fully capable of evangelising, building and pastoring churches. But in our churches today, there is no example for the congregation to naturally imitate. There is no motivation. In most churches, preaching is the specialised role of the pastor, and even in churches that allow the congregation to preach, preaching is supposed to be difficult and not something that the average congregation can easily do. It is not something cheap that anyone can imitate.

The modern church is a bit like the church that thinks babies are dangerous to stand, dangerous to walk, dangerous to run, dangerous to fall, dangerous to hit their foreheads, so they tie them up and don't let them do anything. Then, at the age of five or six, when they see that they have grown up enough, they are trained to stand and educated to walk. Moreover, they start by teaching them about the human body, first with a lecture on standing, and then on walking, including a sense of balance and the structure of the various parts of the body. It is too late.

And the churches don't know about evangelism other than preaching. So, if there is even the slightest opportunity for evangelism, the pastor has to come out and preach. Without the pastor, there is no evangelism. Without the pastor, you can't do anything. Without the pastor, there would be no night and day. Do it pastor, that's the pastor. After bringing up the congregation in such a way, the pastor moves about gleefully, saying, "My congregation can't do anything unless I take care of everything ・・・・". They are no better than an educational mother who has raised her own child to be a coward who can't even take an entrance exam by himself, and then happily accompanies him to the interview room saying, "Without me, you can't do anything". Then, after running around so busily, they become "ahhh, I'm tired" and completely neglect their original job. A pastor's primary job is not to preach. It is to coordinate the whole church so that it can do the work of service. Find a congregation that can do the work of preaching better than the pastor and leave it to them. Counselling should also be delegated. And the visitation should be left to the pastor. If we imitate the saying that the church is a body, the work of the pastor is similar to the work of the nervous system. The head's commands are transmitted to the whole body, and the whole body is monitored to feel where it hurts, to know where it is sick, and to work so that each piece functions in harmony.

Now, just when I was getting a bit tired of talking nonsense and being hateful, and my jaw was starting to rise, we had another coup d'etat fiasco. With such incessant repetition, I had become so used to it that I couldn't get excited at all. On the radio, listening to the live broadcast from the car, I could hear the sound of machine gun fire, the crack of heavy weapons, the occasional crack of a bullet landing at close range, and the screams of reporters running for cover, but when I got home the TV was playing a tennis match and a song programme. The Marcos regime is still in control. It was 3 December 1986, the fourth day of the Cu.

I received a phone call from the President of the Order. 'What? From Japan?" The telephone had recently been installed, but I couldn't get through to him, even when I called within the same city, and I was making puns like "The phone's not picking up". Then, of all things, I received an international phone call from the head of the Unjoin Order. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a notice that Japanese nationals in the Philippines should gather at the Hotel Nikko to avoid being caught up in the coup d'état. The Chairman's voice sounded worried.

I'm not joking. This is the countryside. Coups are a thing of the past. First of all, it takes at least eight hours to get to the Hotel Nikko from here, passing right in front of the Philippine military headquarters, where tanks are running around and machine guns are firing wildly. 'Thank you for your concern. 'We are at peace here, don't worry. ・・・・' I bowed repeatedly and put down the receiver. Then I thought. Why do I have to bow on the phone ・・・・・? I am still a respectable Japanese.

Let's put the coup to the side and get back to ・・・・ the main point. I said that the church in Japan would grow "tremendously" if it adopted what I am advocating, but here again I am theoretically on safe ground. There are so many great pastors and evangelists in Japan today that it is unlikely that any church would be so eccentric, eccentric and thoughtless as to listen to a poor, dirty, no-name evangelist like me and try to put it into practice. No one is willing to give this a try. So it is impossible to prove practically that what I am saying is wrong. In contrast, those who talk about prayer, cleansing and bluffing to save 10 million people, without any concrete proposals, will admit their mistakes. ・・・・・・ I don't know how many years later... ・It is a mistake to think that they are wrong. It is a mistake to think that ・・・・. It's not easy, and these people are quite stubborn. They will not admit their mistakes so easily. Some time ago, at a global conference of evangelicals held somewhere, these same people declared that they would send out "Sun 100" or so missionaries from Japanese evangelicals to foreign countries by the year one thousand nine hundred and ten, and even announced something like a written pledge, but even if it ended up as a complete pipe dream, they still had no face, or rather, no face at all. He has a big face, so even if he can't save 10 million people, it's still 'something on a frog's face'. I am also taking advantage of that face. That is what faith is all about.

Those who are 'properly offended' by the words of a bastard like me should, if only out of anger, try what I call 'but evangelism'. If it doesn't work, it's your fault. If it works and you go

from 45 active members to 150 in three years, ・・・・・ here are the odds: ・・・・ I'm proud of you. From the first story, with the way the church is today, a pastor of a church with 45 active members, that's already a result of really hard competence and tremendous effort. If you add that much ability and effort, 150 people is light, and if someone like me were to pastor a church in the current way it is, no matter how it turns out, it would be 25 people. That's in a central city. In a provincial city, 15 people is the best we can do.

There are many people in Japan today who are willing to become Christians - 36% of the population according to an NHK survey. According to one well-known British research organisation, the Christian population in Japan is 40% of the population. We should not be surprised. If they say that most Germans are Christians, then by the same standard 40% of the Japanese are Christians. However, there are probably no more than 0.3% of real Christians.

The church has lost 90% because it does not preach the gospel except on Sundays, has lost another 90% because it does not preach the gospel outside church halls, has lost another 90% because only pastors preach the gospel, and has lost another 90% because it only preaches the gospel in the form of sermons. In the end, the church has lost 99.99% of its gospel, and it has only gained one ten-thousandth of a percent. Moreover, this is a very naive calculation. There are as many people who could be saved as there are stars in the night sky that Abraham could not count. But those who will be saved in the present form of the church and evangelisation will be fewer than the very stars of the dawn sky.

An absolute prerequisite for successful evangelism."

I would like to take a moment here. There is a popular movement in the Philippines called the Local Reform Movement, which is doing a very good job. One of the leaders of this movement, a doctor, through his many years of experience, mentioned four things as the absolute prerequisites for a successful local movement.

1. it must be economical. In other words, it should not cost money.
2. ease. In other words, anyone can do it. 3.
3. adaptability. In other words, it can be done under any conditions. 4.
4. excellent reproducibility. (Reproducibility might be a better term), i.e. the ability to increase one after another.

This is quite a noble idea. Perhaps the doctor was being modest when he called it a 'local movement'. As a people's movement, it is directly applicable to urban areas.

※※※※ Being economical ※※※※

Looking at our current evangelisation from these four points of view, unfortunately our evangelisation will never succeed. First, our evangelism costs money to the point of fear. A church building and land, the salary of the pastor-evangelist, the running of the Bible school and the support of the students, and the normal running of the church. On top of that, missionaries like me come in and take donations without being asked. Then there are the pastors who have conveniently fallen for the prosperity gospel, who can't stand anything less than first class, and the costs go up. Faithful congregations are no better than crying children and pastors. To be a Christian is to be threatened, cheated, cajoled and coaxed out of your money in the name of an omnipotent God.

According to one report, the amount of one Christian's offering can be as much as 100 times the total amount of a family's offering in a new religious congregation. Yet, our fellow workers are always scratching their heads about the lack of money. Because we think with a sore head, we assume that if we had money we could evangelise, and that the reason we can't evangelise is because we don't have money. But you see, in the New Testament, the issue of money is not mentioned at all when it comes to evangelism. At least as far as the Bible is concerned, evangelism has nothing to do with money. There are no reports that evangelism was not possible because there was no money, nor are there any reports that evangelism was possible because there was money. There are no heroes who gave tens of millions of yen for the construction of church buildings.

Modern evangelism will never succeed unless costs are lightened. The most expensive expenses are the salary of the pastor-evangelist and the church building. And the training of evangelists. We have to do something about this. But evangelism", as I advocate, solves this to a large extent.

※※※※ Being easy ※※※※

Secondly, evangelism today is becoming even more specialised and demanding of high standards. To become a pastor-evangelist usually requires at least three years of Bible and

theological training after university. Pastors who did not graduate from university will always believe that their lack of evangelistic ability is due to their lack of education. A pastor must have a degree in psychology, be skilled in counselling, be familiar with Old Testament and New Testament theology, have a deep insight into political economy, dream in Greek and speak Hebrew in his sleep. On top of that, you have to be eloquent enough to go beyond Chrysostom. You can't do that as a layman. You have to have a 'calling' to do it.

The difficulties of building a congregation, of pastoral care, of evangelisation. You can't understand it if you haven't tried it, can you? I, too, have been discouraged and disappointed by the difficulties. And because I couldn't even have the good heart to overcome the difficulty through training, I tried to make something difficult easy. That's why I assumed that 'but evangelism' would be easy.

I want to reiterate that I am not saying that highly educated and trained pastoral evangelists or theologians are unnecessary. I am simply saying that it is not necessary for everyone to be one. A very ordinary person with a clear experience of God can evangelise five or ten people and take care of that group. Then there is a person with a little more training on top of that, who can give occasional guidance. Then, on top of dozens, maybe hundreds of them, you have one well-trained evangelist. One doctor in 10,000 is all that is needed.

Evangelism in Japan today is indeed difficult. However, as the example of the Spirit of Jesus Mission makes clear, evangelism in Japan itself is not that difficult. It is that we have made something that was originally easy difficult, and we are worried that it is difficult and difficult. We have created a huge ghost of a standard for evangelists, and we are afraid of it. We have made up our own monster of the need for church buildings, which doesn't exist, and we are frightened of it. They have created a Sunday-only rule and are bound by it. They have built an ivory tower of preaching that no one can climb. They are strangling themselves. They are falling into a pit of their own making.

Some yokozuna retired and became a professional wrestler. He is said to be a burning 40-year-old man. By the way, I saw a video of a match he had in the US, his home country, and thought. This once popular yokozuna is still green as a wrestler, bound by sumo kata, sumo moves, sumo techniques, sumo rules, and unable to keep up with wrestling, where you can punch, kick, scratch, bite and hit him with a chair. He is still bound by his own rules of wrestling. The winners and losers are obvious. Wrestling, as a sport, is a complete showcase for the audience, according to a scenario that has been set up from the beginning to give them

the most pleasure. In other words, it is modern American show business and entertainment at its best, and it is very interesting to watch from this perspective. So, it is not always the strongest who win, but it seems that there are basically ranks according to strength, and our Yoko Amiden has yet to make it into the ranks. Our church is a wrestling ring that is confined to the rules, restrictions and techniques it has worked so hard to create, and can never compete with the freewheeling, lawless world of professional wrestling. In this respect, But Dendocho follows the rules of lawlessness in this world, biting and scratching.

※※※※ Being adaptable ※※※※

The next step is adaptability. Our present Church is an imitation of the Western Church, which is nothing more than a collection of individualists. By nature, the Church is universal and omnipresent. When the Church expresses itself on Japanese soil, it expresses itself in a Japanese way. We have been hindering it. Instead of building the Church itself, we have tried to forcibly make the Church into a Japanese Church by importing the American expression of the Church, or worse, in many cases, the incorrect external form of the American Church.

The gospel, which is essentially universal, has been interpreted and developed exclusively in Western life and philosophy, and has not been cooked in such a way that it can be understood and accepted by the Japanese, or eaten by them. The gospel we preach is the offspring of a gospel cooked to suit Western tastes in the pot of Greek logic, with the seasoning of rationalism and rationalism. Our evangelistic sermons are antiques, more than four centuries old, and our Sunday Schools are more than two centuries old. Our drum-beating evangelism is a century old and mouldy. When it comes to evangelism and church formation, which is based on building church buildings and gathering people together, we are no better than 16 century-old mummies. I hope you've had enough of this.

A tepu sent from Japan is now singing 'Hani no Yado wa ・・・・・'. I asked my wife. 'Hey. What's 'haniyu'?' 'Well, what is it? I've never eaten that stuff.'

If you're under 40 and know this, you're a good man. I'm over 40, so it's not a big deal. What about you? Until just a few decades ago, many people knew about it, it was everywhere in Japan. Most people don't know it anymore. And what are we trying to do by bringing in something that is centuries old, and even foreign?
American cars that do not suit Japanese road and family conditions are thoroughly unsuccessful. An American gospel that doesn't fit the Japanese way of life and thinking will

also be an absolute sell-out. But But Evangelism is adaptable.

It is highly multiplicative. ※※※※

The last is proliferation and reproducibility. Does evangelism produce evangelism? Is the church producing the church?
Does the church produce the church? Does evangelism produce evangelists? Is the pastor producing pastors? Unfortunately, the current state of our evangelism is 'no'. Why?

There are major obstacles before evangelism produces evangelism. There is a big obstacle before the church produces the church. There are major obstacles before the evangelist produces the evangelist. There is a major obstacle before a pastor produces a pastor. What is the major obstacle? Bible schools. Seminaries. It is the belief that only those who have received special education can do the work of evangelism and pastoral ministry. That is why churches cannot immediately produce churches. Pastors cannot produce pastors. They have to wait for years. Millions have to be spent. If you send them off to city schools, the young ones do not come back. You can't send them off to solid families. Even if they are 'lucky' enough to return, they are useless in the countryside because their minds are too city-oriented. Moreover, they all have an academic complex and cannot speak the gospel with conviction. Every once in a while, there is someone who speaks the gospel with conviction, but just like I did in the past, they think they know everything without understanding anything about the world, and they preach cocky sermons with a Myochikiri, unbelievable confidence.

Without learning, you can't evangelise. Who said you can't pastor? It is certainly not the Bible. There should be Bible schools and seminaries. No, they are necessary. But it should be easier to become and remain a pastoral evangelist without going to such a place.

The task of making disciples was originally given to the church. The church should make disciples. The church should produce evangelists and pastors. Neither Bible schools nor seminaries are churches. If the church reaffirms this important task and takes on this task, many more evangelists will be born, not yellow-mouthed, blue-bottomed evangelists like I used to be, but evangelists who have been through the rough and tumble of society, trained in the school of life and trained up in the training ground of the home. Many more pastors will emerge who understand the realities of the community and the needs of the people and can respond to them more effectively. There will be more genuine preachers who can preach with more 'life'. And only those among them who have proven by practice that they really have

gifts, and who have been judged to have more advanced studies, should go to either Bible school or seminary. After all, that way they will get more students. It is easy to see that such students are superior in every way to those in their present form.

In general, schools create students and train scholars, but not apprentices. An apprenticeship is not a study of learning, but a study of practice and real life, of the human being himself. It is not learning by paper and pencil, but learning by watching and imitating a good teacher. The disciple does not study theology, but learns the theological way of life from the way the master lives. Christ, the best and greatest teacher, did not build schools, did not build classrooms, did not use paper, did not open textbooks. How many teachers are there in our schools today who are true teachers in this sense? Certainly, there are many teachers who are of excellent character and work. However, schools have the function of hiding both the character and the work of such teachers.

Teachers in the eyes of students are teachers, not fellow workers. He is an examiner, an administrator, a supervisor, not a worker who sweats, gets his hands dirty and struggles together for the same purpose and the same goal as himself. The teacher's purpose is to teach; the student's purpose is to learn. They are both in the same place with different purposes. However, this is not the case for teachers and apprentices in the apprenticeship system. Certainly, they are also the one who teaches and the one who is taught. But they have a common goal, a shared purpose. They suffer together towards that goal. That process, that process is disciple-making. The disciple learns from the suffering master. They learn patience, devotion, love, tolerance and work. At the very least, Christ's disciple-making was such.

Such discipleship training is only possible in the local church. However, because all pastors have been trained in schools, they assume that training can only be done in schools. This is because people first learn by imitation. But try one thing for yourself. You can start a pioneer mission or a second worship service in your own church and train a congregation to take responsibility for it. Where the pastor weeps, prays, groans, suffers, has sweat on his forehead and blackened his hands, let the congregation be there too. Let the congregation see the pastor depressed by failure, driven by disappointment, and sinking into despondency. Let them see the tenacity that still refuses to give up, the persistence that still refuses to back down, and the passion that still refuses to stop. Let them see the real pastor, who is laughed at, mocked, belittled, deceived, almost frustrated again and again, but who still forgives, loves, tries to understand and works patiently. Not the figure of a cliché, an actor, a performer, preaching from a pulpit, but the true figure. The congregation will not sit idly by. They begin to work

together. They begin to struggle together. That's where disciple-making comes in.

Then you start another pioneering work, open another place of worship, ・・・・・ a congregation's house far away is enough. Three or four people are perfect. Raise a congregation that can take that responsibility. ・・・・ It is a mistake to start pioneering only after the congregation has been raised. The congregation grows together with the pioneers.

The current state of our churches is that there is little work. Therefore, there are few believers who work. Therefore, there are few who are saved. As a result, there is less work. And there are fewer believers who work. Therefore there are fewer people to be saved, and on and on it goes. Therefore, let's increase the number of workers, even if it is a little too much. Working congregations will be born. The number of those who are saved will increase. More work will be done. Working congregations are added. But evangelism is highly reproducible.

Here I encourage young evangelists to become 'tent-making evangelists' with a job in their hands like Paul. I hope that the Japanese church will break free from the evil 'myth' of the so-called 'full-time evangelist'. Among us it is said that the evangelist works for a living, as if it were a sin of unbelief. This, however, has no biblical basis, as Paul's example and those of other New Covenant workers make clear. It has long been accepted as a matter of course that 'clergy' have a profession, even if one unpacks the history of the Church. Therefore, the question of what vocations are not suitable for 'clergy' has been debated and taught from time to time, with vocations that require long periods of time away from the office and morally problematic vocations being singled out as undesirable. The argument that 'clergy' should not have a vocation may have been made elsewhere, but it has not attracted much attention.

It is probably only in the last two centuries that this has changed into our present 'full-time' consciousness. Moreover, this is not so common in traditional 'Christian' countries, so it seems to be a complex, a strange way of thinking, peculiar to 'missionary lands'. I can't say with certainty, as I haven't done any definitive research, but many people blame this on the rich missionaries. I think so too. In other words, the missionaries arrived with a strong sense of superiority, backed by an advanced culture and strong economic power, and immediately paid the locals to work for them. Naturally. And when they found new converts with a bit of enthusiasm, they immediately paid them to become helpers, interpreters, train them and turn them into evangelists. The missionaries hired for money, of course, demanded 'full time'. The missionaries skillfully used the Bible to ensure that those hired were diligent, hard-working and faithful forever. And they succeeded in making 'full time' appear as if it were biblical.

They threatened to do faith, perseverance, devotion, and brainwashed them with manna from heaven, Elijah's raven, Philippians 4:19. The theology of the power-ruvinist 'calling' must have played a significant role, too.

'Full-time' has its 'full-time' qualities. Let's admit that. In particular, our contemporary way of church and evangelisation is based on the assumption that we are 'full-time', and we tend to assume that we must be 'full-time' at all costs. However, what is now being called into question is such a way of being and evangelising the church. If that is changed, this will change too.

Think about it. How much does it cost to support one 'full-time' evangelist? How much money and years does it cost to train that evangelist? It is all at the expense of the churches, which are not large, and each is mostly occupied with its own affairs. The blood and sweat of the less affluent congregations. This is not the kind of vital evangelism found in the New Testament.

What would happen if someone started pioneering while holding a profession? However, this presupposes two things. First, there must be a clear escape from the threatening notion that 'tent-making evangelism' is a sin. With this intimidation, you are defeated from the start. If you are threatened and brainwashed that marriage to an unbeliever is a sin, and yet you fall in love with an unbeliever and continue to associate with her, riddled with guilt, you will end up following the example of many young women in our church who were defeated and had to leave the church and give up the faith. We should quickly, easily and generously say goodbye to the unbiblical, intimidating ideas that have been planted for the convenience of missionaries and pastoral reasons. Even young female believers who are not very faithful and who date and marry unbelieving men with impunity, continue to attend church 'unabashedly' after marriage, and in time lead their partners to salvation.

Secondly, do not get caught up in modern church patterns and evangelistic methods. If you become a 'tent-making evangelist' while inheriting the mould and evangelistic methods of the modern church, you will surely fail. If a professional wrestler fights on the ring, according to the rules of wrestling, he will not win in the first place. Therefore, you must not work on your own. You must not hold up a sign and hold a worship meeting without a congregation and wait, praying, for people to jump in by mistake. You must not prepare things like sermons.

After making sure of these two points, what happens when you do 'tent-making evangelism'? There are many possibilities. However, I would strongly recommend one thing. If you do visitation evangelism, workplace evangelism, home Bible study, or whatever, and you find a

few people who look like believers, you can make them into 'tent-making evangelists' like yourself. Take them out on evangelism with you during work, go on visiting evangelism with them on your days off, and drag them around to Bible study in the evenings. Teach them that very ordinary people can evangelise as ordinary people. The 'tent-maker you' as an evangelist, unlike the 'full-time' preacher, is something that everyone can imitate immediately. Babies grow by imitation.　Congregations also grow by imitation.

So, in your pioneering work, you haven't even opened a worship meeting yet, but the congregation will walk with you, and you will experience the pain and the joy of evangelism. No, the congregation will take you where they think you should go, to where they think you should go, to where they think you should go, to where they think you should go. You have to build up a number of such congregations. It is foolish to pay a lot of money to rent a large room in a prime location without a congregation. When you have a congregation of ten people, you can use one of their houses and start a public worship service. It can be on Sundays or Wednesdays. If you want, you can do it twice a week in two different places. When you do this kind of evangelism, the congregation grows quickly. After a while, they start going out on their own to evangelise and hold their own meetings. It is enough for them to become 'full-time' evangelists much later.

Immutability of the universal church

Now, how effective is the 'but evangelism' propaganda? 'It's from the harakiri. Don't scoff at it as a catch-all. Don't call it a picture of a cake made of rice," I would like to say in the Meiji style.

By the way, if I say "Wise readers may already be aware of this", it will sound like Sanpei Shirado from 25 years ago, but anyway, I'm sure you are aware of this: ・・・・・. If we try to take this 'but evangelism' seriously, we will not be able to stand on our own feet with the general view of the church that we have had until now. If we stick to the current church forms imported from the West, we will not be able to keep up. So the question arises: what is the church?

What is the church? ・・・・ is a sobering thought. It's that feeling you get when you drive for seven or eight hours on a road so bad you're afraid your guts will all turn inside out, and

when you finally reach the end of the road and take a breath, you are told by your predecessor that you will now walk for six hours over that mountain. When I looked beyond where he was pointing, the mountains were far away, shrouded in white clouds, and the road was impassable to horses. I often complain about why I became a missionary in the first place. But I am a well-respected missionary. He bites his complaints with his back teeth, smiles and says, "Alright, let's go.

Those who came to see my mission field would say to me, "Do you always come to this kind of place? How wonderful. I'm so impressed. You have perseverance. Your devotion. I am still coming to this place because I am a competitive person and I can't back down from what I have said.

So, when it comes to "what is the church", I feel horrified like that. I don't have the courage to challenge such profound theology. I might be able to do it in 60 years, but it won't help me urgently. So we came up with a desperate plan. I want to talk about what kind of church we should build.

Serious evangelists know that the purpose of evangelism is church planting. That's why evangelists are determined to build churches, no matter what it takes, like racehorses. The same was true for me. Even though I was clinging to a stone, I tried to build a church and make a name for myself. ・・・・ No, I was a little more innocent in those days and fought hard to build a church for the glory of God.

In Tokyo, in a densely populated downtown area, I worked with a 'vision' of at least 60 people attending services, a monthly income of 200,000 yen, and a church building a few years later, with my feet 63 cm above the ground. He worked until one day his eyes suddenly glazed over and when he asked the doctor, he was laughed at as being acutely malnourished; two years later he was sent to the middle of nowhere in Okinawa, stunned and appalled at how different the conditions were. Still, he stepped up to the plate in a desperate attempt to build a church. While he was working hard, he suddenly felt like an idiot and went fishing. 'Self-sufficiency evangelism', he reasoned. As I wondered why I had to make such a fuss about being self-sufficient, I realised that I didn't know anything about the church, that if I could get a congregation of 60 people, hold Sunday service meetings without a hitch, have enough money to support the pastor and the running of the church, and maybe even get a congregation built early enough, that would be enough to get the church off the ground. If a church building is built, is that a church?

I didn't even get rid of my fishing tackle, I just jumped on the Bible. And so I struggled night and day, trying to learn what the Bible teaches about the church.

What a thing to say! I was trying to plant a church without knowing what a church was. My respected Bible school teachers threw us out and told us to plant churches without teaching us what a church is. What would you call this if you didn't call it a rare occurrence? No, perhaps all the other students knew this as common knowledge long ago. But wait. I don't think I was the worst student either. I was just much lower than average. If that is the case, then I am sure that there are others who were sent out to build the church without knowing what the church is. We were boxing without a clear target. It is not too late. Let us make our target clear.

We are building a church, not a churchyard. Consultations on church building should be taken to architects and builders. We should take our church-building advice to the Bible. The church we are building is the church as God's will revealed in the Bible. It is not enough to take the local churches recorded in the Bible, such as the church in Ephesus or the church in Corinth, and bring them into the modern world. The church of biblical times is the original form of the church in God's will, adapted to the time and place, i.e. the specific culture, and not the original form itself. Our task is to learn the church as God's will from the direct teachings about the church and the state of the church in biblical times, and to build it in Japan today.

I would like to ask you to put aside the very plausible argument that "it is Christ's work to build the church, not ours". Because the point is not the same.

Our work is to help the universal church to express itself in certain areas through the proclamation of the Gospel. The universal church, being universal, does not try to bring the form of one particular local church to another. It expresses itself in the form most appropriate to the culture in which it exists in each region. We should allow the Universal Church to express itself freely and unhindered. The Church tries to express itself in America in a way appropriate to America, and in Japan it tries to manifest itself in a way appropriate to Japan. We should not hastily import the American way of the church or export the Japanese form of the church based on preconceptions. Such attitudes everywhere continue to hinder the true self-expression of the universal church and, consequently, the growth of the local church.

Therefore, it is natural that the outer aspect or form of the church should be different in a thousand ways. However, the content of the church is universal and unchanging throughout the world and throughout the ages. What, then, is the immutability of the universal Church?

'A community of the same faith.'

It means, first of all, that the Church is a people. It is not one person. It is a people. And these are not people who have gathered there simply by chance, as a 'ragtag group', but a people with one particular commonality. This commonality is not a commonality of race, nation, culture or ideology, or wealth or poverty, education or lack of it, or even a commonality of liking this or disliking that, but a special commonality of faith. It is one common faith that believes in the living God, the Creator of all things, accepts Christ, His only Son, as Saviour, reforms its sins, trusts and follows Him as Lord of its life, and lives daily under the control of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, or the Holy Spirit. The Church must not take as its banner any other commonality than this one common faith.

Peter Wagner observes churches sociologically and finds that all growing churches have some commonality that unites them, some commonality other than faith in Christ, and argues that for a church to grow it must have such a commonality. His observation and analysis of the church is probably correct. His pragmatic argument would also be correct as an efficiency argument, given the current prevailing view of the church and the current thinking about the local church. If the local church is simply a part of the universal church, then it is acceptable to say that it should have something in common other than faith in Christ. However, the local church is not part of the universal church, but is the universal church itself, a local manifestation of the universal church. His argument is theologically totally false.

What makes the church the church is the unity of faith in Christ. What Wagner identified as the commonality of the local church is rather a factor that alienates those who do not have that commonality. Factors that alienate should not be brought into the service of church unity. In other words, no church should be created that has as its common factor anything other than faith in Christ, such as a church of music lovers, a church of literature lovers, a church of cookery lovers, a church of LDP supporters, a church of Socialist Party supporters, and so on. Wagner's point is in direct opposition to the nature of the church to unite different people, transcending all differences and breaking down all barriers. Nothing other than faith in Christ

should be a common factor in the local church. Wagner has put pragmatism above the Bible. If you keep putting worldly philosophy, pragmatism or whatever it is, on top of the Bible, you are moving further and further away from the Bible.

And if people are gathered together in one common faith in Christ, that does not mean that all is well. If each person with this one common faith lives independently and on his own, he does not form a church. The church is a community built up by these people because of their one common faith, not a mere gathering. However, now that the church has already been built up once, there is no need for individual people to get together and build it up again. For us today, the church is not a community built up by individual believers. Rather, individual believers were born into this community of churches the moment they came to faith.

This is difficult to understand for people living in the modern West, where individualism is so strong that community is not so powerful. For them, faith is something that belongs to the personal dimension, and through personal faith they are personally saved, personally commune with God and personally enter heaven. The church is something that individuals with that personal faith can join when they want to, voluntarily, freely and without any coercion or constraint from anyone, according to their preferences, and when they are fed up with it, they can simply stop without even making a single phone call.

In other words, for their faith, the church is like a sashimi skirt, which is essentially of no importance whether it exists or not. The most important thing for them is the individual. It is the establishment of the individual. That is why the phrase "nothing should come between you and God" pops up frequently. And Japanese pastors, who have unwittingly become infatuated with the idea of individualism, in other words, have abandoned their traditional Japanese identity and have become half Westerners, take it as it is. What does the Bible say? The church is the bride of Christ, whom he loved and for whom he laid down his life. The importance of each of us owes something to the importance of the Church.

It is the Church as a community that is important, not the individual. The importance of the individual is important as a member of the community, and that importance is lost to a great extent when one leaves the community. This sounds like totalitarianism, and those who have had to sacrifice everything 'for their country' may feel a chill run down their spine, while younger entrants may feel as if they are hearing a surviving Japanese soldier who has suddenly returned from the jungle saying, 'I am sorry, Your Majesty'. But such is the Church, whose members are willing and able to lay down their lives for the good of the whole. It is not like

being forced into war. It is a willing one. That is what Paul meant by the church. The church is not a collection of individualists who quietly hide themselves away when they are in danger and disappear before long.

When we are born into the world, we are not born into a social vacuum. We are born into a family, a kinship community, a local community called a village, a town or a neighbourhood association, or even a large community called a nation. It was born, it was born, it was made to be born, it was brought into being, it was dropped into being, without any connection to our choice. We are nurtured and nourished in the community in which we are born, and we receive many things from that community and contribute to it. We did not come together to form a community, but the community was there," and in it we were born.

In the same way, when we had our second birth, we were born into the community of the Church. Christians do not come together to form a church. Christ intended the church as a community, not a 'Christian club' where those who are saved by personal faith live apart, sticking together when they want to and leaving when they want to.

'I have had several nannies come to my house. People are always saying things like, "A missionary has a nanny!" Don't be put off by such things as 'missionaries as nannies!' In this country, it is socially accepted that those who can afford to take in a nanny to help the poor, and it is wrong not to do so. So even in our family, we have a nanny who is not necessary. True to the saying 'many children of the poor', most of them have ten or more brothers and sisters. Sometimes they borrow their wages in advance. ・・・・・ Since our family pays well, and quite well, sometimes there is a gap between us and the nanny who works for a local employer. In fact, many nannies are simply working and being fed without a salary. They are so-called 'mouth-breathers' ・・・・・.

When they borrow money in advance, it is usually because their parents or siblings are sick or injured, or because they have "tears to hear and tears to tell". I am ashamed to say that I have lived in this country for more than 16 years, but I don't know how I will survive after giving all the money I borrowed in advance to my parents and siblings. The older siblings usually do not even go to high school (the Japanese equivalent of junior high school), but work and look after their younger siblings through high school and sometimes even university. I have never heard them complain or grumble about such an environment. They sacrifice silently, as if it were a matter of course. It is not at all unusual for them to have sick parents and to sell themselves in order to take care of their siblings. These women would take care of their

parents and siblings even if they themselves went to hell. They are 'angels' compared to the American women missionaries, such as the 'Japayuki-san', who are often talked about as an international problem, and who are in this day and age of individualism. ・・・・・・ A bit of an exaggeration. ・・・・・ And the younger brothers and sisters who are taken care of will have a better life than their older brothers and sisters, and this time they will take care of their parents and their older brothers and sisters.

There are many things that we don't have in this country, but one thing that I have never seen before and I think I will never see again is a home for the aged, what I used to call an old age home. I have heard that there is one in Manila, but I doubt it. It is not hard to say that social welfare is lagging behind. But the old people in this country would rather be with their children than in an old people's home, even if they starve to death. The children will feed their parents even if they can no longer feed themselves. For them, the parental debt is literally deeper than the sea and higher than the mountains.

The nanny who worked in my house had not long become a Christian and knew nothing about the Bible. But the way she lived her life, giving everything she had to her ailing parents, could never be imitated by a missionary who preaches about love in Greek. She doesn't even use the word love.

Those who have grown up in America, a country where parents are not obliged to support their children once they turn 18, and in this individualistic country where children are not obliged to support their parents, do not understand the meaning of community. ・・・・・ In fact, surprisingly, there are quite a few Americans who are beginning to understand this. However, there are many in the Japanese church, which is focused on America, who do not understand this. I, too, was brought up in a family environment in a cultivated village in Hokkaido, where there was little sense of community, and I have lived out my life with the aim of being thoroughly individualistic and independent. As a result, I do not understand communal society in the true sense of the word. This is why he was able to accept the gospel of American-style individualism and become a Christian.

This is something I was able to say only after I went abroad, became acquainted with people from more than 20 different cultural backgrounds, became able to look at the country of Japan objectively from the outside, and gradually came to understand Japan and myself as a Japanese person. Now, when I came to Tokyo from Hokkaido, and slept and woke up with Bible school students from all over Japan, I began to understand why there was such a gap between their

way of thinking and my own.
I began to understand why their way of thinking was so different from my own. The other students were much more traditionally 'Japanese' than I was.

I have already mentioned that Paul emphasises this truth of being born into community with the particular expression of being baptised into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. When we read his description of the church as the body of Christ, it is truly a 'destined community'.

Individual believers live and work within the Church. As members of the Church, they are the object of Christ's love. It is inherently impossible to be a Christian who has left the Church and is not connected to it. In reality, however, there are a surprisingly large number of such wandering Christians. Especially in the USA, pastors are interested in the number of attendees and the amount of donations, not the people themselves. This is the same as a theatre manager. So they do spectacular things to attract people. The congregation looks for churches with interesting programmes in the newspaper every week and attends. They play little or no part as members of the community. Over there, there are more and more purely 'congregationalist' 'churches' these days, which do not have a membership system.

Spiritual facts in the Christian life have to be realised in real life. In other words, the spiritual fact of being cleansed must be realised as a clean life. The spiritual fact of being freed from the noose of sin must be realised in a life that is not defeated by sin. That is why those who live by the Spirit walk by the Spirit. In the same way, those born into the community, the body of Christ, must realise that spiritual fact in their real life. And this can only be done by joining the local church, living and working within it.

The universal church does not express itself in any other way than in the expression of the local church. Christians cannot live and work as members of the universal church in the proper sense except in a way that is firmly connected to the local church. From this perspective, the existence of parachurches is somewhat problematic. This is especially true for those who belong to a parachurch but do not belong to any local church.

The teachers in our seminary are all missionaries who have moved to the mountain city of Baguio here in the Philippines. The school was built for the Assemblies of God's work in Asia and the Pacific, and students come from all over the world. The teachers are also international, and all hold doctorates and master's degrees. Naturally, they are busy working every day in seminary education. Many of them began to attend our church services. However, I did not

welcome them and made a stern request to the seminary. If seminary teachers want to attend our churches, they should do so as responsible members of the congregation and as members of the church. Please don't come with the attitude of 'let them come when they want and serve when they want', as is currently the case. Of course, I also want you to give your donations properly, just like any other congregation. Please don't get in the way of our work, which is trying to raise up a responsible congregation." Fortunately, the headmaster understood my offer, but many of the teachers insisted that we were working for the Lord from Monday to Saturday, and that they wanted Sunday services to be free. So I asked them. 'What church congregation are you? A seminary is a school, not a church. Our church congregation also works Monday to Saturday and faithfully serves in the church on Sundays."

Eventually, this led them to plant a small church where they were free to attend their own worship meetings. In short, they have a different view of the church. Because they are doctors, because they are masters, they are always welcome in the local church. It is a mistake to think that we will always be given a place of service and respect. Seminaries are not churches. Teachers are also expected to live a proper church life. We don't want 'bad role models' who can't do it properly. However, many parachurches can be seen as a necessary evil arising from the failure of the local church to fulfil the role it was supposed to play, or as a deformed and incomplete local church in itself. There are plenty of local churches that are more unchurched than parachurches.

Anyway, the right way to be a Christian is to make the spiritual fact that you are a member of the universal church a reality in real life, as a member of a local church. ・・・・・Something is getting awfully theological, isn't it? After all, what's within is always overflowing, isn't it? After all, the bottom is shallow.

When I was in Manila doing pastoral work, there was a Japanese housewife in attendance. She was a beautiful woman who had no children and lived a relatively wealthy life, and she liked to jingle shiny things around her. As she grew in faith, the jingling became less and less. After she returned home, the family visited her home several times and had the opportunity to chat with her. One day she said. One time she told me: 'I used to like accessory one. But recently things have changed a lot and it's not like it used to be. But I still want to wear one thing somewhere. Something a bit more luxurious, where no one can see it. ・・・・ I want to hide it. But the truth is, you have to be able to see it casually when you do something. Ahahahaha ・・・・" She also died of cancer a few years ago at a young age. She died a few years ago of cancer at a young age, having fought a good fight and led her family to faith. I

wonder if she is over there right now, sparkling something and laughing 'ah ha ha'.

Well, I got theological about it, but not much anyway. I want you to put up with the shallow-bottomed ones flaunting it. I want you to laugh generously in that way. Aha ・・・・

What does it mean for Christians to make the spiritual fact of being part of the universal church a reality in the local church? It means being in line with the purpose that God has purposed for the church to be. What is God's purpose for the church? It is redemptive, missional, Christological, eschatological, and concerned with the Kingdom of God. ・・・・・・ This sounds more and more theological, but I have no idea what you are talking about.

If I write this in an effort to make people understand, it will inevitably get confused and cause havoc, so for the mutual well-being of the author and the readers, I'll stop there.

God's will for the Church is that it should be a bearer of the Gospel, that it should represent Christ in the world as His ambassador, that it should apply His work of redemption to all tribes, and that it should serve to build the Kingdom of God. The Church was founded by Christ to be part of God's work of redemption, the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the restoration of all things. In other words, the Church was created for the work of God's mission. It is not wrong to say that the Church has a mission, or that the Church has a mission, but it is more correct to say that the Church exists for the sake of mission.

'The Church exists for God's mission.'

The Church exists for God's mission. That is the second point I want to address in the immutability of the universal Church. The Church is not something that those who are personally saved and personally destined to enter heaven join as a 'waiting room fellowship' of those with a ticket to heaven during their sojourn on earth. It has been set up to play an important role in the history of God's redemption, in the history of the world's restoration, and for that purpose, as God's own agent, carrying out God's own work.

This is the reason for the existence of the Church, the purpose of its existence. No matter how large the congregation, no matter how large the offering, no matter how magnificent the synagogue, no matter how splendid the choir, no matter how deceptively the angels sing, if

the church neglects its mission, the proclamation of the Gospel of God, then it has lost what a true church should be A Catholic theologian in the 16th century was truly spot on when he accused Protestants of not being the true church because they had no mission. The Protestant churches of the time showed no interest in missions at all, except for the Ana Baathists. That is why the Tokugawa Shogunate excluded the Protestant nation of the Netherlands, the only Western Christian country in the world to do so, from its isolation.

Therefore, all local churches, which are concrete manifestations of the universal church, should clearly recognise mission and evangelical mission as the reason and purpose of their existence and live accordingly, should be aware that it is for the sake of mission and live accordingly. The spiritual fact of being a member of the universal Church must be concretely expressed by participation in the missionary work of the local church.

In Old Testament times, God planned to bless the whole world through one people and chose Israel.
He chose Israel and blessed them first. However, Israel did not realise God's intention, was overawed by the fact that they were chosen, enjoyed the blessing only in vain, and spoiled the purpose and mission of being a vessel of blessing for the whole world. For this reason, God has cut off Israel, raised up a new people of God to replace Israel in the New Testament era, and intends to bless the whole world through that people. That new people of God is the Church. But if God did not spare the branch of the olive tree, but cut it down, he would not spare the wild olive branch that was inherited from the original tree. (Rom 11:12) If the Church despises mission, God will cut it down and be done with it.

By the way, there is something fishy about this understanding of mission these days. It has long been suspicious among socialist churches, but even among evangelical churches, this suspicious idea has been gaining a lot of ground recently. The Covenant adopted at the Rozanne Conference in 1973, which was considerably influenced by so-called 'radical' groups sympathetic to the so-called 'gospel of liberation', made this dubious trend clear. This has also had a considerable influence in Japan and other countries, and has led the evangelical churches to turn their attention to social action. The second conference, held in Manila this year, was said to have raised a number of issues in this area, but I have not yet been privy to a detailed report, so I will refrain from mentioning them.The person who played a major role in the preparation of the 1973 covenant was the aforementioned Mr Stott, who, in his opinion, was responsible for the church's mission, or purpose, There are two reasons why we were sent into this world.

The first is evangelisation and the second is social action. Evangelisation takes precedence over social action, but these two are like two wheels on two ends of one axle, without either of them there is no use. Therefore, a church that does not participate concretely in social activities is missing what a church should be. And that social action, they say, is to help the poor, liberate the oppressed and restore the essential dignity of the human person. Specifically, it is to send food to the hungry in poor countries, to denounce oppressors and to fight against all forms of evil.

This makes me completely uninterested. Why should a church of the poor, where the congregation is poor and the pastor often has to spend days without food, take part in social activities, why should it give to the poor, when the poor live forgotten deep in the mountains of the 'bankrupt country' where I work? . Such logic is the bedtime talk of big churches in rich countries. If the Japanese church imitates this, it is the tall tale of a poor church in a rich country. When it comes to denouncing oppressors and fighting evil, I, a weakling, feel a shiver down my spine. Who determines who is the oppressor and who determines what is evil? Socialist Christians denounce liberalism, liberal Christians call communism the devil. There is nothing more frightening than the church deciding what is right and wrong in social structures or politics. I don't want to be part of such a crusade. Which of the coup attempts that have been repeated many times in this country is good and which is evil? I don't want to be a judge. Western religious notions of absolute good and absolute evil should not be allowed to come into play in political events.
Moreover, according to Stott, evangelisation is, as mentioned above, only the proclamation of the gospel, so the work of equipping congregations and building churches is not evangelisation, nor is it social work, and is no longer part of mission. What happens when churches take church planting lightly and become enthusiastic about social activities? It is not necessary to discuss such things. History proves it. Just look at the worldwide decline of the horribly controversial churches that are socially oriented.

It is good that Stott opposes the use of social action as a means of evangelisation or incorporating it as part of evangelisation, but it is unacceptable that he is showing a compromise against socialism. More than most.
This is a sin-conscious response to the fact that the evangelical churches have dared to close their eyes to social action in order to avoid involvement with the socialists.
This is an expression of guilt and a sense of inferiority, which is not incomprehensible. The problem here is that the churches do not know what their mission is in relation to social action.

So the socialist churches have become so absorbed in social action that they have almost lost their vitality as churches, while the evangelical churches, traditionally indifferent to social issues, are now in danger of becoming immersed in them as a reaction.

What then is the mission of the church? How does it relate to social action? Let us consider this point. What I say is completely original and subject to criticism by all, as I have yet to encounter an opinion identical to this one. I hope that it will be a good platform for discussion. And this goes on to the important third point of the inerrancy of the universal Church.

'The Church sent as Christ's agent.'

The Church has been called out of the world and made to belong to the Kingdom of God, but it has not only been called, it has been sent back into the world again as Christ's ambassador and agent. This is the important third point of the immutability of the universal Church. The Church is Christ's representative, naturally representing His work and taking on His nature. In this sense, Christ was not ashamed to call the Church 'I', and Paul did not hesitate to call the Church 'Christ'.

According to Christ's words, the Church is sent into the world by Christ, just as Christ was sent into the world by the Father. How is it as Christ was sent? It indicates the purpose for which He was sent and the manner and nature in which He was sent. This is the key point. It is to separate the purpose for which Christ came into the world from the nature, way and manner of being and living that He came into the world. Of course, the two are deeply intertwined and cannot be completely separated, but they can be clearly distinguished.

The purpose of Christ's coming into the world was exclusively redemptive. It was for the salvation of people, for liberation, for restoration, for the fulfilment of God's righteousness, for the building up of the Kingdom of God, and many other things that can still be said, but all of these things can be said in relation to the work of redemption, without which they would come to nothing. The mission of the Church must therefore be an atonementist objective. Salvation without redemption, the restoration of humanity, the fulfilment of God's righteousness and the building of the Kingdom of God are not in the will of God and are not the mission or mission given to the Church.

The mission of the Church must therefore be, first of all, to proclaim the redemptive work of God, accomplished through Christ, and to provoke a human response to it. Then it is to welcome into its fellowship those who have responded rightly to it and make them part of itself. In other words, evangelisation is the mission, there can be no other mission. Just as Christ had no mission that did not involve redemption.

What then of social action? What happened to God's public justice? Is not the Church to do God's work? Is not the world full of evil? The important point is that Christ did not come into the world with the purpose of carrying out the public justice of God apart from redemption. If Christ had such a purpose, He is a failure who failed to fulfil it. It also means that God's public justice belongs to God, and that the Church has received no command or power from God to carry it out towards the world.

Vengeance belongs to God. The fulfilment of the public right of an eye for an eye does not belong to the Church. (An eye for an eye means doing public justice, unlike the popular understanding of vengeance. Let us learn from the fact that throughout history the Church has often taken on the role of judge in the name of God and has repeatedly failed miserably. Righteousness is the nature of the Church because it is the nature of Christ. But the Church's righteousness is a righteousness in the process of being perfected towards the righteousness of Christ, i.e. an imperfect righteousness, not the public righteousness of God. It is not a measure of social or political evil.

What then of the deeds of Christ's love? What about compassion for the poor? Did not Christ feed the hungry with bread and fish? What about the second commandment, "Love your neighbour as you love yourself"?

Surely Christ had compassion on the poor, the weak, the sick and the oppressed, and did something for them. But the crucial question is whether Christ did them as a separate purpose for coming into the world, one that has nothing to do with redemption. It is true that they were evidence of the coming of the Kingdom of God. But the Kingdom of God itself is not something that is dealt with independently of the Atonement. As far as the Bible is concerned, it is only incidental that Christ performed such works, and He did not go to the trouble of planning in advance to carry them out. If it is to be an objective, it must have been planned in advance.

Christ's social activities, His acts of love, are not the purpose for which He came into the

world, but His way of life, His way of living, which inevitably comes from His nature. Since God is love, naturally Christ is love. When love encounters misery and wretchedness, it causes a feeling of pity, which in turn induces action. The Church, as Christ's representative, naturally reacts to the misery of the world with the same nature as Christ. But this is a natural outgrowth of the nature of love, not the purpose of the Church. The purpose of Christ's coming into the world is not the fulfilment of such general love, but only the fulfilment of redemptive love, redeeming love. The Church was sent into the world as Christ's ambassador, not for the exercise of general love, but for the exercise of redemptive love.

This is made abundantly clear by Christ's own words. Christ satisfied the stomachs of five thousand with five loaves of bread and two fish. This is a miracle so great that the four Gospels record it together. And socialist churches or those who focus on social action invariably cite this passage as their argument. Those who saw the miracle wanted to make Christ king at any cost. But soon after the great miracle, Christ said something like pouring cold water on the hot heads of his disciples, who were at the height of their excitement. Work not for food that will disappear, but for food that endures forever and leads to eternal life. That is what the Son of Man will give you. (John 6:27)

Christ clearly denied the importance of the great miracle He had just performed in front of His disciples, who were fussing over it. What was a great miracle was a great miracle. However, He forbade the disciples to work for the food of the world, which would disappear and perish, in clear words that left no room for doubt, and strictly commanded them to concentrate on the food that leads to eternal life, that is, on the work related to redeeming love. He reaffirmed that the giving of food that leads to eternal life, i.e. the work of redemptive love, is his purpose. Therefore, that which was Christ's own purpose is the purpose of the Church, which is His body and representative.

We, the present Church, take the old commandment "Love your neighbour as you love yourself" so seriously that we often preach, send food to Africa and Asia, and deliver relief supplies. However, it does not add up that the new commandment to "love one another as Christ has loved you" has been completely forgotten. Christ did not discard the old teaching, but He taught that in the new community that looks to Him as Lord, the new commandment should precede it. General love gives up its seat to redemptive love, and universal human love gives up its place to mutual love in the community of those who have experienced redemptive love.

It is a sin for the contemporary Church to flaunt love for humanity in an attempt to win the world's hearts and minds, while pushing this mutual love into splendid oblivion. It is a step towards the modern religion of humanist faith and syncretism. There are many in our churches who are poor, sick and in need of help. Does the Church do anything for them? How many churches have firmly integrated it into their programme of work as a regular and important part of their work, rather than just doing and seeing it from time to time? When I said this, a Filipino pastor replied. The Filipino church is too poor to do that," the Japanese pastor explained. The Japanese pastor added: "There is no one in Japan who needs help nowadays. Both are lies.

Neighbourly love, universal human love, is superior to mutual love in its scope. It is first given to Israel and then adapted to the wider scope of all humanity, and is not given specifically to the Church. In other words, it cannot be the purpose or mission of the Church. Mutual love, on the other hand, is clearly given specifically to the community of those who have experienced redemptive love, the Church, and is a commandment that is possible only for those who have experienced redemptive love. Only those who have experienced redemptive love and thus have new life, new possibilities, can expect mutual love. But even if mutual love is something specially given only to the Church, it is not the mission of the Church. It is one of the ministries of the Church. This point will be discussed later.

That is why the mission, the purpose and reason for the existence of the Church is evangelisation. It is a work that is thoroughly concerned with redemption. It is essentially the same mission that Christ, the Founder and Head of the Church, the One who lives within and the One who sent Him into the world, had when He came into the world. The Church is Christ's representative. Today Christ does not walk along the back alleys of downtown Tokyo or the footpaths of Kanida village in Tsugaru-gun, laying hands on the sick and speaking to the aching, as He once walked along the shores of the lakes of Galilee, healing the sick and helping the aching. But Christ continues essentially the same work today through His body, the Church.

If one member of the congregation has compassion on the poor and extends a helping hand, it is not merely the work of one member of the congregation, but the work of the Church, the work of Christ who is still alive. If a member of a nameless congregation visited a hospital, called out to someone who was sick in body and soul, laid hands on him and prayed for him, it was Christ who did so. If an old farmer met a poor believer on a mountain road in the countryside, where no pastor or evangelist would look, and heard the gospel as he chatted with

him, then the old farmer had met Christ. If the gospel that the window-sill businessman, who was drunk with the world in the cul-de-sac of the drinking district, heard in the twilight of dawn, was the gospel that Christ spoke to him in the form of a newspaper deliveryman.

The modern church must be firmly aware of this. Every Christian today must be clearly aware of this. One of the unchanging qualities of the universal Church is that it is the ambassador and agent of Christ.

'The four fundamental ministries of the Church'

The next immutable property of the universal Church I would like to mention is the four basic ministries. The purpose, or missionary work, or evangelisation, has just been mentioned, but the Church has many other ministries as well. When the various ministries of the church are organised and summarised biblically, they seem to come down to four basic ministries. Some say three, others say five, but I consider it best to summarise them into four. I prefer four beats." The four are 'worship', 'teaching', 'fellowship' and 'evangelism'. These four are not separate and distinct from each other, but are in fact closely intertwined and overlapping with each other, but for the sake of convenience it is easier to separate them.

All the work of the church is related in some way to these four. Any work that does not relate to them is not essentially the work of the church. If a church neglects any one of these four, it has lost its proper form. A church may choose any form, shape, style, organisation and mode of activity. It should only choose the one best suited to its local environment, including its local culture, politics and social form. However, if a local church lacks any one of these four, it is not a healthy local manifestation of the universal church. In other words, these four ministries are what makes the church the church. These four are called 'worship', 'instruction', 'fellowship' and 'evangelism' in English respectively, but it is helpful to remember that the first letter is spelled out as 'wife'.

Of these, only 'evangelism' is the mission of the Church. It is the purpose for which the Church was sent into the world. The other three ministries do not have the necessity for the Church to be sent to the world. In other words, if it is worship, it is the other world ・・・・ somehow strange. Maybe 'his world' would be better. Or even "his generation" would work. If it's "the other shore", shouldn't it be even if there is some Christian influence behind the word? ・・・・・

Anyway, the three ministries other than evangelisation can be done even if the Church is not sent into the world and remains, as it is, in the Kingdom of God. In fact, it can do better that way.

Worship in the world is often hindered by the distractions of the world. We think we are praying to praise God, but before we know it, we are thinking about stewed taro for tonight's meal. The noise of this world also shuts me down. I can't even sing praise satisfactorily because I'm worried that my poor voice will disturb everyone else. Ah! When that day comes! I will beg for a voice that is tauter than Mario Lanza, deeper than Artur Eisen, smoother than Hermann Pry, yes, sweeter than Nat King Cole, and five octaves as high as Marian Anderson's, and sing Amazing Grace with all my might! I'm not going to let anyone complain. No one will complain. Sing like Taro Tokai Rin Taro or Presley. Sandi Patty's not bad either. But I still prefer Pavarotti. ・・・・・

In his day, there will be no need to squeeze your head in pain to study "the teachings" anymore. No more worrying about Old Testament theology, New Testament theology, organisational theology, modern theology, exegesis, hermeneutics, philosophy, psychology, Hebrew, Greek... Hooray! Because our image will be Christ-like, there will be no more detailed 'do this, do that' of the life of faith, no more 'don't do that, don't do that'. In his world there will probably be no need to learn the truth. Instead of learning it, we will understand it. We will no longer see it as through a mirror, but as ・・・・・ an ancient mirror... ...we will see it clearly.

It's the same with fellowship. When you become like Christ, there will be no more meanness, covetousness, impatience, stinginess, jealousy, boasting, gossip, dragging others down. No more "I'm not going to worship today because that brother is going" or "I'm not going if that sister is going". Everyone will be in fellowship with one another in love and joy. In his world.

But what about 'evangelisation'? I want to go into his country and be very excited, I want to share my joy. I want to share my excitement. I want to evangelise. I want to bring my parents, my brothers, my sisters, my relatives, my colleagues, my friends, my neighbours, everyone. And I want to run out into the clear, glassy, pure gold boulevards and evangelise everyone who passes by. But everyone who comes is saved. It is not evangelising. I can't say that I don't wish with all my heart that I could come back to this world, from his world's point of view, once more.

So evangelisation is the reason why the Church was sent into the world. But even while the Church is in the world, worship must be offered. A church without worship is not a church. God's people are a people who worship God. Worship, that is, praising God and adoring his glory, is the ultimate purpose of the church. The church exists for the glory of God. The essential purpose of man is to worship God. Salvation through redemption and the Kingdom of God all have the glory of God as their ultimate purpose. Evangelism is about God's glory and not about human salvation, restoration of humanity or ending with human liberation. Salvation, restoration, liberation, unity, peace and prosperity, excluding God's glory, are Babel, God's enemy. Evangelism is the purpose for which the Church was sent into this world today. Worship is the ultimate purpose of the Church and all creation.

** Worship ※※※※

Does our church really have true worship? The fact that there is a worship meeting is no guarantee that there is worship. Do people really worship in the worship meetings of our churches? Is the programme appropriate for worship? Is the sermon always appropriate for worship? Do the songs sung have the meaning of worship? Are the prayers prayers of worship? Are they mere rituals? Does it end up being mere education? Has it become mere socialising? Has it become mere entertainment? Is God definitely being worshipped and glorified?

The worship service is not the only worship service. Worship services are only a small part of the whole church, even if they have an important meaning. The church service is 24 hours a day. It is worship every single day. The life of each member of the congregation itself is whether or not they are living a life that worships and reveals glory to God. In other words, whether they are living a life of devotion.

Incidentally, as far as the activities of the early church as described in the New Testament are concerned, there is no example of Christians meeting for the purpose of worship as in modern times. The traditional understanding of the modern church that the worship meeting is the central activity of the church does not seem to agree, at least not with the early church. The gatherings of the early church were centred on teaching and fellowship. And, of course, there was also praise.

Praise can be done while driving. I sing hymns best when no one is listening. Prayer is also

good when I am alone. Worship can take place anywhere, anytime. A worship meeting is unnecessary for a church to worship. We do not meet in worship meetings to worship. We meet together 'to worship in common'.

The Meeting for Worship is one of the concrete expressions of the unity of the Church. There we confirm the fact that we are one body, cleansed by the same blood and animated by the same life, and we worship as one body. A worship meeting without such confirmation and awareness of each member of the congregation is like soup flour without sugar, botamochi without sweet bean paste, tendon without tempura, kimchi without chili peppers.

That is why, for example, when I administer the sacrament of Holy Communion, I go to the trouble of making a large loaf of bread like a rice cracker and use it whole. The reason for this is to emphasise one thing. (I Corinthians 10:16-17) Furthermore, the sacrament may be brought to the beginning of the worship meeting so that the worship meeting can proceed with a clear awareness of the One. In worship meetings, the congregation not only worships God, but also checks each other's faces, rejoices in each other's safety, shares blessings, bears each other's burdens, talks about visions, and enjoys the blessings of being one.

In this sense, I dislike the quietness of the Japanese church before the service. I am fed up with the instruction: "When you enter the sanctuary, don't talk to anyone, don't greet anyone, just pray and greet God first". You don't have to come to a prayer meeting to greet God. I greet God first when I wake up. I have been talking to God for a long time before I came to the worship meeting. When you come to a worship meeting, you greet everyone you meet. You share the blessings you have received during the week. We ask each other if we are safe, to bear each other's burdens. And then, hand in hand, rejoice, be of one mind and of one heart, and pray for each other. It is good that there is a lot of noise before the service. Don't get me wrong.　We are not asking you to talk about TV dramas or practise the piano before the service. Nor am I asking you to tune your guitar. Nor am I asking you to bang on the drums, which are all the rage at the moment. I'm not asking you to make the PA system make a blare before the service.

The silence before the service is somehow reminiscent of the silence or ethereal atmosphere of Shinto buildings such as shrines, shrines and shrines surrounded by large trees. It evokes an extremely Japanese aesthetic sense of "I don't know what is there, but it is there". Of course, I think this is just my own way of feeling, but if the silence before the service comes from the sense of "here is God", it is a pagan element that God is here (there is no other God), and is

not appropriate for Christian worship. Nevertheless, it must be good for those who worship to have a special attitude because of the fact that God manifests his presence in a special way (as an occasion and not a place) on the special occasion of public worship.

Korean Christians are admirable. Without exception, every Korean Christian who visits my home first hangs his head, puts his hands together and quietly prays for a minute. Then they greet me. I just typed a not-so-nice word, ・・・・・, and my word processor made it into these Chinese characters, as if I was not a Christian. So, out of respect for the word processor that got me this far, I leave it as it is: ・・・・・ And now I feel ashamed and bitter, but I ignore it because I don't want to offend anyone with such a thing. But this kind of custom might be accepted in Japan. But this is not what living a God-first life is all about.
When you visit someone else's house, first of all, you should greet the people there properly. This is a proper Christian attitude.

An unbeliever with a Christian wife jokingly told us, half-heartedly, half resignedly. My wife was very honest and lovely before she became a Christian. She used to be very happy when I bought her little presents. But nowadays, no matter what I buy her or what I do for her, she says 'Thank you, God' before thanking me. It's not funny. It must be very uninteresting. ・・・・・ I sympathise with you.

Anyway, a worship meeting is not an individual worship service. It is not a worship meeting where individuals worship on their own. It is not the right motive to come to a meeting for worship to say that there is no place for prayer at home because the lodgers are lying around, or that you can't worship in peace because you are in the way of the brahmins. The purpose is to worship together as a community.

Therefore, I cannot stand the fact that unbelievers are welcome to participate in such worship meetings. Unbelievers are an obstacle to worship meetings. They do not belong to the community. I am not satisfied with prayer in their presence. I cannot praise them with tears. In the sacrament they must discriminate by not giving bread and wine. (I choose not to discriminate.) The sermon becomes shallow. No true instruction, encouragement or rebuke can be given. You cannot expect congregational growth in such a worship service. It must not.

I used to pride myself on being an 'applied' pastor who could preach evangelistic sermons in the worship meeting, and I used to boast that people would be saved in the worship meeting as well. Now, however, he is instructing people not to bring unbelievers to worship meetings.

He sometimes scolds congregations that bring unbelievers. The role of the congregation is not to bring unbelievers to worship meetings, but to speak the gospel to them and lead them to salvation. Once saved, they are encouraged to attend worship services as a matter of course. As a result, the quality of the worship service as a worship service has improved significantly and the congregation has started to grow. Naturally. Our worship meetings are 'public' and 'worship' and we should avoid anything that is not public or not worship.

In my professional life, I have been to many different churches. Showing up at different worship meetings in different churches in different countries, in different groups, with different traditions, or with no tradition at all, is a very pleasant experience, although ・・・・・ not recommended for the general congregation in terms of ・・・・・ ecclesiology. The programme of the Reformed stream of churches, which are uncomfortable unless everything is theologically reasoned ・・・・ I tend to be too, ・・・・・ damn serious worship meetings. They seem to believe that the Holy Spirit works in the preparation phase before the worship service and never during the service. On the other hand, the programme of the 'ultra-Pentecostal' and charismatic churches, which are not interested in theology, is a 'haphazard and random' programme of not having a programme. They apparently believe that the Holy Spirit only works during the worship service and not in the preparation phase.

Worship meetings that continue to value hymns that came out of the 'Imasama' melody in England 300 years ago, calling them solemn, as if they were the only official Christian music. A worship service where people who have no real Christian experience are not involved with the emotions and experiences of real Christians, but only the most popular phrases, based on computer-generated data, are strung together to make fake music that resounds loudly. A worship service that churns out commercial-based 'Christian music' from cover to cover with drums, electric guitars and synthesisers, with no biblical, theological or moral reflection whatsoever. Worship meetings of small tribal churches that carry on traditional folk music with 'tambourines' made of rattan rings to which pieces of iron are attached, and bass flutes made simply of thick bamboo cut and perforated. A worship service in which hundreds of bamboo tubes, pitched according to their thickness and length, are played beautifully while being struck with a light touch. On the other hand, a worship service that stubbornly maintains that all instrumental music is a sin of offering 'foreign fire' and goes by the name of a cappella. A worship service with a pipe organ made of bamboo pipes playing 16th-century chants.

There can be many forms of church services. Those who say they cannot worship without noise can start a quiet worship meeting. If you can't worship without being noisy, you can

start a ・・・・・ noisy worship meeting, although there are not many Japanese who are like this. One church can hold a number of worship meetings. Those who think they can worship better with their hands up should not hesitate to do so. Those who judge that raising their hands is not biblically well-founded and not appropriate for a worship service that should be solemn, should follow their conscience and not raise their hands. While these people are unable to accept each other's position, it is better to hold two worship meetings so that they do not have to worship together. However, two churches should not be created. They should grow in the same church until they realise how such things as whether they should raise their hands or not is a matter of branches and they can accept each other as different limbs of the same body. Let's have worship meetings where we stand up and worship, and let's have worship meetings where we bow down and worship.

The Baguio Church, which we pioneered six years ago, holds three worship meetings on Sunday mornings. Besides the differences in language, we also make the whole programme different in terms of the atmosphere of each service, the type of songs, and the way they are sung. This is to meet the needs of different people. In Baguio, which has a population of 200,000, about 20 languages are spoken at any one time, but about 30% of the people do not understand Tagalog, another 30% do not understand English, and less than 10% do not understand Ilolino. The Tagalog worship group is a small gathering of about 30 people. The Ilolino language worship group is a relatively relaxed gathering in line with Filipino tradition, with around 100 people.　It is the opinion of those who do not understand that noisy worship meetings seem to be the most effective, so let's make them all noisy. There are a small number of people who will never be able to worship in a noisy worship meeting. Even here in the Philippines. For them, we need quieter, smaller worship meetings. If possible, we would like to have a few more worship meetings.

Nevertheless, there is something I don't like about the worship meetings in many churches these days. The songs that are sung are overly emotional. The lyrics are the same. The melody is the same. The rhythm is the same. The instruments, the sound, everything is like that. Even if this is unavoidable to some extent, because of the trend towards commercial music today, and because of the way people live today, the music of a worship service should not be something that panders to the world. Music used in evangelistic meetings as a means of communicating the gospel is important for communication, so naturally it should resemble the music of the modern world, but worship music is intended for worship and comes from the depth, breadth and depth of our experience of God. In other words, it is an expression of our faith, not communication. If anything, it is about communication with God.

However, as our current church services also serve as evangelistic meetings, the music is a means of gathering people rather than for true worship. Therefore, the music is more entertainment-oriented and American-style. This is especially a problem in churches that are considered evangelistic churches. Therefore, the worship meetings of these churches often lack worship. Instead, there is what might be called 'religious existentialism', in which the true God is not worshipped regardless of human feelings, moods and preoccupations, but is completely excited, intoxicated and self-gratified by a series of emotional songs. The main concern of our churches is not how much the glory of God will be revealed, but how much we will be immersed in a 'religious good mood'. Is there true worship in our churches? This vice of religious existentialism is strong and even dangerous in the worship of Pentecostal and charismatic churches, which tend to emphasise religious ecstatic experiences. The danger is particularly strong in charismatic churches that emphasise the experience of the Holy Spirit as renewal and renewal of faith, compared to Pentecostal churches that emphasise mission. Emotional music designed to promote such tendencies has recently been imported considerably by traditional churches that do not have an experience of the Holy Spirit. It is ludicrous.

※※※※ Teaching ※※※※

What then of teaching? Is our church as a whole, as a community, growing in its knowledge? Does each member of the congregation study the Bible well, understand the doctrine and know how to live in society? Can we lead unbelievers to the faith correctly? I have already mentioned that the congregations of our churches are generally speaking horribly immature and underfed children ・・・・ is this a dead word now ・・・・. Are pastors really trying to help their congregations grow? I am sure that there is no pastor who would say that a blind shot sermon once a week is sufficient education, but the fact is that the majority of the congregation is being "blessed" by a misguided sermon once a week. The fact is that it is the congregation's poor attitude, not the pastor's stilted sermon, that is the reason for the lack of blessings in the worship service. I was once scolded: "Listen carefully to any sermon and you will find that it contains God's message for you." It was after a worship meeting in which I let out a yawn. After that, I tried to listen to the sermon with a mind and heart sharpened. As a result, I learnt that our pastor uses terrible Japanese, which is a foolish fact.

The Japanese language is incredibly difficult. According to a foreigner who can use Japanese and many other languages without any difficulty, it is a myth among Japanese that Japanese is particularly difficult, but whatever the myth, it is difficult. English is surprisingly easy. I am struggling with this easy language, but that is the fault of my brain, or rather, the fault of Japan's English education, and in turn the fault of the Ministry of Education, not the fault of English. English is easy to construct sentences. Therefore, even if the English sermons are not very good, each sentence is relatively well constructed. But what about Japanese? It is said that we have some very good preachers (?). Among the pastors in our congregation, as far as I know, only two and a half preach in proper sentences.

The difficulty of the Japanese language is made painfully clear when it has to be interpreted into English. There is no subject. It is unclear whether it is past or present. It is not clear whether the number is singular or plural. The expressions are ambiguous and the meaning can be taken in several ways. Therefore, the Japanese pastor's poor Japanese should not be blamed too much. The ugliness of my Japanese is as clear as a pig's inability to hide its nose, so it would be shameful to become a snake.

Anyway, there is no doubt that this preaching-only education, wielding bad Japanese, is one of the main causes of the fragility of our churches today. Moreover, our sermons are full of Christian terminology and smell of incense. Can't we speak a little more in everyday language?

The church must teach the Word of God more thoroughly. There is no need to use the muddled phrase, "Is our church teaching? Our churches are not teaching. It is a period. So, whatever it is, the teaching of the Church must be restored, because it is the Church of the Church. The Japanese church is a 'teaching association'. However, teaching has disappeared from Japanese teaching groups. The Japanese church is good at delivering theological treatises from the pulpit, as if they were academic theses, but can't they do more teaching on a biblical basis in everyday life? Can't the gospel be presented in the Japanese language that an old lady in a kappo-gown and sandals uses every day around 4:37am to buy rape leaves and ganmonodoki at a shopping street in downtown Tokyo? Can't the essence of the gospel be revealed? Can't we teach the Bible to those who live in such a city life environment in the language they use in order to continue living in it?

The author of the letter to the Hebrews seems to have been somewhat annoyed at the slow growth in faith of his readers, the Hebrews, (Hebrews 5:11-6:2) but why is this a luxury? How many of our church congregations today have sharper ears and can endure hard food than the

Hebrews, who at that time were "infants with dull ears and in need of milk"? Incidentally, let the congregation read Hebrews. How many can understand it better than the Hebrews, who did not even understand the basics of the day?

Of course, we are not Hebrews, so we are not familiar with Hebrew customs and traditions. That's a handicap, but even so, how do we compare with our ten-year-old congregation? I envy the author for being able to say something quite difficult, saying, "I have much to tell you, but your ears are dulled, so that it is difficult to unravel it." But this is no one's fault. It is our own responsibility. We have made the church cease to be the church.

We need to teach Bible study, not just Bible teaching. And not the kind of study in which one person spreads out a desk full of Bible dictionaries, commentaries and reference books, but the kind of study in which several people gather to read the Bible together, exchange their understanding of its meaning, share their wisdom about its application to real life, and pray together so that they can put it into practice. The church must teach such a way of learning. When the church studies together in front of the Word, that is, when several believers read and study the Bible together, they must know that the Holy Spirit guides, teaches and corrects them in their discussions. The author of the Bible is the Holy Spirit. If you can get the author to be with you, it is best to have the author explain it to you. And one of the most important things the Holy Spirit does in our time is to reveal the Bible to us. Before you start reading the Bible together, it is good to acknowledge this presence of the Holy Spirit and pray that He will give you understanding as you read and guidance as you discuss it.

・・・・ Do you think that if we do that, we will make mistakes? That is right. Mistakes can happen anywhere, anytime. But isn't reading the Bible and listening to the Holy Spirit the great heritage of Protestantism? Catholics, fearing mistakes, made the mistake of forbidding people to read the Bible. That was the biggest mistake of all. If reading the Bible alone is to be encouraged, reading it in groups should be more encouraged.

・・・・・ Don't worry. Mistakes made by ordinary believers can be easily corrected, have little impact and rarely cause major problems. As long as our churches are trying to follow the Bible, it is impossible. The danger is with those who are theologians, biblical scholars, or pastors, or famous evangelists. If you look at the history of the church, those are the people who have caused big problems and heresies. They are not congregations. ・・・・・・

What the church needs is not fine musicians, choirs, soloists or moderators. It is someone

who can be the centre of their own Bible study and small Bible study gatherings. It is lamentable, however, that singers have become such a pampering feature of the church, as it is evidence that the church has fallen into the trap of crowd-pleasing show business.

For a church to be a true church, its teaching must be sound. Is our church worthy to be called a church?

☆☆☆☆ Fellowship ☆☆☆☆

And what about fellowship? Does our church have fellowship? Some people call worship meetings fellowship. That is not entirely wrong. If a worship meeting is a public worship meeting, then of course there is an element of fellowship. But in reality, is there any substantial fellowship?

We prefer the solemnity of the Japanese way, so even in worship meetings, we are quiet and we say, "God is with us" in the silence.
We like to feel the presence of God in the silence of our worship meetings. We like to feel the presence of God in the silence of our worship meetings, as in "My soul waits in silence for God". After the service, I gently embrace the blessings I have received so as not to lose them, and go home without saying a word of greeting. It is always the young people who don't know what a worship meeting is about who chat before the meeting, and it is the thoughtless, immature and unspiritual aunties who keep their mouths shut after the meeting.

'Oh no. Our church is not like that. We even serve tea after the service, we have a luncheon, and we have a fellowship meeting planned separately ・・・・". Well, that's fine. The truth is that many pastors are more nervous about fellowship than you might think. For example, if you want to bully a pastor, all you have to say is. That is enough to make most pastors cry on the futon that night and not sleep until they have turned over about 103 times. Some pastors even go so far as to profess that their churches must be small in order to keep fellowship intimate. I don't think this is by any means an excuse for my church being small. Also, "family church" is one of the ideal images of the church in Japan, but that presupposes that it is small. I have visited a number of churches that call themselves such, but the only thing family-like about them is their size, and the content is not family-like at all.

If you think your church is family-friendly, please rethink whether you really are. In your church, do the members actually help each other, encourage each other, support each other, sacrifice for each other, be selfish at times, fight with each other, and forgive each other? When they hear that someone has a fever and is dizzy, they rush for a doctor or medicine; when they hear that he has had an accident, they are so surprised that their hearts stop and they just sit there and dread; when he doesn't come home at 11pm, they call all their relatives and friends, making a fuss about the police and a missing persons report. Do they worry about each other like ordinary families? After I got married and had children, I realised that to love is to worry. The Bible tells us that God cares for us.

The church does not have to stay small to be family-friendly, and small does not guarantee that it will be family-friendly. A cozy fellowship of drinking tea, chatting and joking with each other is not the kind of fellowship I am talking about. Rather, it is fellowship in fulfilment of the new commandment given by Christ: 'As I have loved you, so love ye one another' (John 13:34). (John 13:34)

The Church is the family of God. In it we are born and birthed. Not according to blood, not according to lineage, but according to faith, by grace we have been made members of the family of God. The constitution of this family of God is to love one another. The standard of love is not the old commandment of self-love, but the self-sacrificing love that Christ has shown us. And all members of this family of God are born again as those who have been partakers of Christ's love and life and are capable of love.

We were all once dead and incapable of loving in the true sense of the word. The old commandment of love was not given to us as something we could keep and keep, but as something we could not keep even if we tried, that is, because we were overcome by our imperfection and realised that we were only sinners. There were many times when Christ taught those who claimed self-righteousness specifically what it meant to love and then commanded them to do it, not because He expected them to be able to do it, but because He wanted them to realise that they were sinners in the face of the fact that they could not do it. He wanted them to realise that they were sinners in the face of the fact that they could not do it. The Targum on the Mount cannot be read correctly unless it is read with this understanding, and the same is true of the story of the rich young man.

But we are now made to live a new life, and we have been given a new commandment. The new commandments were not given to those who have been forgiven of their sins in order to

create a sense of sin, but in order to keep the commandments themselves. We have been made to have new life flowing through us and to be able to keep the new commandment. We are now connected to Christ and can bear fruit, just as the vine branch connected to the trunk bears fruit in abundance. This is truly the gospel.

The Christians of the early Church understood the Church as 'koinonia' and realised this potential to the full. Koinonia is a communion in which we share with one another. The churches shared the life of Christ, shared His mission and shared their possessions. From the very early days, the Jerusalem Church began relief work for the poor in the congregation, especially widows and deemed children. Moreover, it was not just an occasional need, but one of the most important ministries of the Church, the most church-like ministry of the Church, and continued as a regular activity at least until the Church was scattered from Jerusalem to other places due to persecution. Of course, this work was not initiated by the Church or by the Church alone. The Jews had been doing such relief work through their synagogues for centuries already, and the early Church merely copied them. Rather than imitating it, they adopted it as a matter of course. The difference is that the Church's relief work was inspired, provoked, amplified and increased by the love of Christ, and reached a greater scale and depth.

The modern church has dismissed the Jerusalem church event as a temporary thing, which is a big mistake. The way and system of relief work was carried out must have been temporary or on a case-by-case basis. However, relief work itself is a concrete expression of love and should continue in whatever form it takes as long as the need arises. And throughout the history of the Church, such a need has never ceased and never will.

Paul put his life on the line for the preaching of the gospel. But did you know that he also risked his life for this relief work? As the Church expanded from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria and the Gentiles, it is not difficult to imagine that this relief work was read in different forms and shapes.
It is not difficult to imagine that this relief work took on a different form and shape. Finally, it developed into an international operation. One of the leaders of this was Paul. Not only did Paul regularly lend a helping hand to the poor (Gal 2:10), but on at least two occasions he collected offerings from the Gentile churches and delivered them himself for the famine-stricken Jerusalem church.

The term 'work of grace', often quoted by our churches today when appealing for offerings, was used by Paul to appeal for this relief offering, not for a church building fund or for a

pastor's salary. The offering itself is not a work of grace, but helping the needy brethren is a work of grace.

On his way to Jerusalem with the donations collected from the Gentile churches, Paul was informed by prophecy that if he went to Jerusalem, he would surely be captured and put in mortal danger, but he still wanted to continue his journey. The servants tried to dissuade Paul somehow, but instead they were met with his recrimination. Paul absolutely wanted to complete this work of grace with his own hands, no matter what lay ahead. He had no desire in his heart to be a hero or to be thanked for it. He simply wanted to confirm that he was a disciple of Christ by accomplishing this work of grace.

Christ had established that the evidence of being His disciples was love for one another when He admonished, "If ye have love one to another, by this shall all men acknowledge that ye are my disciples" (Jn 13:35). (Jn 13:35) Paul did not appeal to the number of churches he had planted or the number of decisive men to show that he was an apostle, but to the apostolic character of his ministry, and here he wanted to show that he would lay down his life for the work of grace as 'evidence of obedience to the confession of the gospel'. (II Corinthians 9:13)

Of course, our churches do such works of grace from time to time. But there are not many churches that incorporate such works of grace into their planning as a regular activity of the church. Perhaps the best they can do is to cooperate with my mission to the remote mountainous areas of the Philippines and send used clothing to help poor Christians here.

For many Japanese people today, used clothes are a nuisance with no place to throw them away, so there is little sacrifice in giving them away. The actual packing and shipping, which involves a considerable amount of time and expense, is the major sacrifice. In truth, I am very grateful for the constant cooperation and love sent by the Japanese churches. So many poor Christians are benefiting from it. The amount distributed as used clothing, converted into cash (through church bazaars for Christians only) and used for accidents, illness, fire and other emergency relief, is the most efficient, well-managed and effective of any organisation, I can say with pride.

And what is gratifying is that the churches we have pioneered are not only receiving relief from Japan, but are growing to help each other on their own, even if only marginally. They are offering old clothes and kitchenware for the poor but even poorer people.

・・・・ Just now, my wife, who has just returned from a small fellowship at the Balatok church, brought me the information that the church is taking care of the rent of the house where the wife and children of a member of the congregation who was killed by thugs two months ago live. There are many murders in this country. This year, two members of our church have been murdered, both of whom I baptised. There are many members of our church who have had family members murdered, and there are many murders going on around us.

So the question is whether our churches are taking this work of grace as seriously as Paul did and putting it into practice. We need to know how God paid special attention to the poor, the downtrodden and the weak among his people, and how this was a witness to the people around them. According to the Old Testament, the Israelites were not to harvest all of their crops. Just as our to-the-point daughter of the house was to sweep a square room round, so the four corners of a square field were to be left uncut. The poor could reap the rest. Once an ear of wheat spilled from the hand, it was not to be picked up. The reason for this was so that the poor could pick them up freely. When the grapes were gathered, the unripe fruit was to be left behind and not harvested again. The reason for this was so that the hungry could pick freely. These things are commanded over and over again. Special consideration was given to the debts of the weak; the year of Jobel was fixed; the right of repurchase was also fixed; the tenths offering was also to be used for the poor widow and the bastard child; the harvest was to be used for the poor widow and the bastard child; the harvest was to be used for the poor widow and the bastard child; the tenths offering was to be used for the poor widow and the bastard child. Part of the evidence that Jesus was the Christ, or Messiah, was that 'the poor hear the gospel'.

Do the poor and vulnerable in our churches receive the care of the Church?　The story of the Zarephath widow is often used in sermons. The faith of the prophet, the faith of the widow and the miracles of God.　This is indeed a preacher-friendly story. Today, however, God performs the same need-fulfilling miracles, but in a different and greater way. For God, giving a little bit of flour and a little bit of oil
Giving a little bit of flour and oil was not a miracle in the slightest. Rather, it is a greater miracle to transform a stingy, greedy, selfish man into a man who, through redeeming love, gives to the poor, cares for the weak and helps the downtrodden. I believe that Zacchaeus' change of heart is the greatest New Testament miracle. God is now feeding the poor with such miracles.

Let us pray for the miracle of fellowship in our churches. It is not wrong to teach faithful

giving from the story of the widow of Zarephath. But if we teach it, it is one-sided if we do not strive as a church to ensure that those who offer with the same faith and sacrifice as the woman will definitely have their needs met. (Unfortunately, the truth is that our current church system costs too much money and we can't afford it. It costs so much money to build church buildings, pay pastors and train evangelists. Unless this system is changed, the church can never become 'rich in this work of grace'. (II Corinthians 8:1-9:15)

If the church is to remain something like a fraternity, a love group, a club, a sakre, an 'association', a collection of western individualists, then it can remain as it is. But if the Church wants to live as God intended, as a representative of Christ, it cannot remain as it is.

By the way, when I temporarily returned to Japan this year, several pastors told me something surprising. More than 20 years ago, when I was still working in Japan, there were not a few pastors who did so. But I was appalled that such things were still being done. The reason for forcing them to do this is that it causes problems when congregations gather on their own, which is outrageous.

Church fellowship is not enough just to have church meetings. Meetings are only a small part of fellowship. Congregational fellowship must be voluntary, informal and free. It is the voluntary fellowship of the congregation outside the assembly that is to be highly encouraged. It is even better if it is directed towards helping the weak and poor. If the pastor has the generosity to put up with criticism and even a little bit of bad language, then there is no problem. To restrain the free fellowship of the congregation is to violate the rights of the congregation and is a rebellion against the basic nature of the church. This is not just a pastoral error, but a challenge to the Church itself.

Here comes another piece of news. A jeepney with five young believers, coming out of the mountainous interior under my jurisdiction, had brake failure on a steep hill and fell down a cliff. Many casualties were reported, two of the five congregants died and three were taken to hospital. In the meantime, they have decided to give an emergency tribute fund, made by selling old clothes sent from churches in Japan, to plan for the future. Accidents are very common in this country, where 'horrendous' clunkers are in use. Incidentally, 'jeepneys' are shared-ride trucks used everywhere in the Philippines, often combining parts from second-hand and scrapped vehicles from Japan. The nickname was originally derived from a modified jeep-type vehicle used by the US military.

Back to the original story: ・・・・・・ The Israelites have always greeted each other with the word "shalo'im". The same was true in the early church. Shalom" means God-given peace, but not merely a state of peace in which there is no conflict, i.e. a peace in which all living things have died out and there is no possibility of conflict, but a peace in which there is a vibrant human life. It is a fullness of life in God's justice and order. The Church embodies this shalom as a concrete manifestation of the Kingdom of God and the realisation of God's rule in this world and in this generation. Each one experiences this shalom.

☆☆☆☆ Evangelisation ☆☆☆☆

Now, the next step is evangelisation, which does not need to be mentioned now. Evangelisation is not only the four basic ministries of the Church, but also the reason why the Church has been sent into the world and must continue to exist in the world, i.e. the mission of the Church. A church without evangelisation has lost its purpose as a church.

If our churches are fulfilling these four ministries, it does not matter whether they have a congregation or not, whether they have a pastor who graduated from seminary with honours or not, whether they hold Sunday service meetings or not. It does not matter whether the church has a congregational form of government or a mixture of overseer and elder government, divided by two. Even the highly problematic form of the state church is acceptable in certain special circumstances. It is a grossly misguided argument that the Church is biblical in one form of polity. As long as the church faithfully fulfils these four basic functions, there may or may not be such things as women's associations, youth associations or Sunday schools. If those four ministries cannot be fulfilled adequately because of their existence, then they should be removed immediately. If they cannot be done sufficiently because they are not there, then it is better to create them immediately.

'Carrying out the movement through the function of the gifts'

The next constancy of the universal church is that the work of the church is carried out by the function of the gifts. All that is said to be the work of the Church, not only the four basic works of the Church, but even those works which it is not clear which of the four they belong

to, are set to be carried out by the functions of the gifts.

The function of gifts here is opposed to ministry by position, status, degree or office. Most church work is directed by those who have been given official positions and status, such as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, board members, Sunday school teachers, etc. Such positions and statuses are not necessarily given because of the appropriate gifts, i.e. abilities and qualities, but rather quite often because of the opposite. The work of the church is stalled because those without gifts have been given positions, or those with gifts have not been given positions, resulting in a lack of gifts, and consequently the church's ministry is sacrificed. Such a reality is so obvious that it cannot be overlooked anymore.

The simple fact is that many churches have a number of people who are better at preaching than their pastors. However, the majority of them are seldom allowed to preach and are brought up not to even think about doing so. What would you call this without calling it a treasure trove? They can do the work of visiting, of teaching Bible studies, of counselling, of leading unbelievers to faith, of praying for the sick, of making church plans and programmes, of preparing and carrying out all the work of evangelistic meetings, better, wiser and more skilfully than pastors, evangelists and missionaries, or, if they cannot do it now, they can do it soon. There are one or two people in the congregation who are better, smarter and more skilful than the pastor, evangelist or missionary, or who are not able to do so now but will soon be able to do so. However, I have not seen many churches where the abilities of such people are fully utilised, i.e. where they are active through the function of their gifts. Our churches have become a dumping ground for rotting treasure.

If we try to do the work of the church according to our position or status, we will not be able to do the work of the church that God has planned for us. The work of the church that God has planned is of a nature that comes naturally when we make full and free use of the gifts that God has given us. God did not give the congregation the ability to preach in order that he might keep it hidden in humility, but rather that he might work actively and to the best of his ability. He gave us other preachers because the pastor's sermon alone is not enough. The pastor's sermons may be academic. It may be sermonologically sound. However, it lacks the rudiments and adaptations to everyday life. It may be a powerful and eloquent pep talk. But it lacks tender-heartedness. That is why God has given us a congregation that can preach the teachings of the Bible in the midst of the busyness of floating life, and speak them with a stilted but courteous gentleness. A pastor can preach to a large group of people, banging on the pulpit and heaven forbid, but he cannot preach to two or three people over a cup of tea.

That is why God has given us a congregation where we can visit homes, visit off-ices and preach.

Not long ago, on a Sunday, I was blocked from going to a church in the mountains that I was going to attend, so I had no choice but to go back and attend the Baguio church. I went to an English Sunday School class of university students and found one of the students, who had been saved about two and a half years ago, quite enthusiastic and capable, working very hard to teach about the Second Coming. I was actually somewhat impressed to see his progress, but among the 120 or so people in attendance there were quite a few four- and five-year believers, and a few who had taught Sunday school before. When the class was over and I had a little time, this student who had been teaching gave me the lectern, saying, "Our busy missionary, who rarely shows his face, has come to see us, so I would like to say a few words to him". So I said to him in a hateful way. 'What are you doing here with all these people? Sunday school? But some of the students used to be teachers, and some of them are old believers who know three times as much as the brothers they taught. What you are doing is not Sunday school, but playing Sunday school. It's foolish to sit back and listen, pretending to be humble, when you can teach much better and in more detail. Why are you wasting your time like that? Okay, I'll tell you something good. Next Sunday, only Christians who have been studying here for less than two years should be allowed to do so; all Christians who have been here for more than two years should pair up in pairs and at this time visit their neighbours' houses, go out into the street, go into the park, find someone who doesn't know the Bible and tell them the Bible story. Tell them about Christ and his salvation. Your gifts are rotting away."

I don't want you to think I'm a terrible missionary. To say this much, you have to have enough heart-to-heart communication with both the pastor and the congregation on a regular basis. It is not easy to visit this church on Sundays, but as a missionary who started the pioneering work and has responsibility for it, I visit several times a week, talk with the pastor and the congregation, discuss things, and make plans. As a result, the next Sunday, about 30 groups of university students went out to evangelise. This continued for several times, and many people who were saved through this are still attending the worship meetings.

However, Filipinos are quick to start anything and quick to stop. They themselves describe this character as 'neinas cogon', or 'straw fire'. It burns with a bang and goes out with a snap. In comparison, the Japanese are coke. They don't catch fire for a moment or so, but once they start to burn, they keep it burning for a long time at a high temperature of several dry degrees. I would like to say ・・・・, but sometimes I think it is more like wet linden wood thrown into

a wood stove in snow-covered pioneer Hokkaido. It doesn't catch fire easily, and even when it does, it smoulders and smolders forever, and then goes out before you know it. Anyway, as is often the case, the life of the burning passion seems to have been short-lived at this time as well. So now I'm back to where I started, and I've been slogging along in two classes of about 100 students. One of these days I'll have to give it a shot," thinks the nasty missionary.

When the Holy Spirit baptised the congregation into the church, he was baptising them so that they could function with a view to becoming a functioning part of the body of Christ. We have already noted that this was not to be a 'wart'. God has given every congregation as a gift to the church in a way that it can function, as a functioning thing. The work of the Church is driven by the function of those gifts.

However, at some point in time, the Church developed the concept of 'ministry' and included the concept of 'calling', creating a great divide between ordinary believers and those with special status and position. In Japanese, lay believers have been referred to as 'lay believers'. If this is not a discriminatory term, what is? Congregations should be angry. They should be angry at the concept, not the terminology. God did not bring such discrimination into the church. In the church everyone is a believer. All are basically congregations that stand on the same footing.

Well, in the New Testament, the names apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, etc. appear. Many people consider these to be offices, but this is a mistake. Indeed, it was an office, a role, a division of work, a worker called as such. However, it was very different from the modern office, i.e. pastoral or evangelist.

In modern times, the office is generally referred to as 'ordination'. The examination of whether a person is truly qualified for that office remains very, very, very neglected, requiring only the necessary academic qualifications, a couple of Christian lifestyle checks and a diploma from a Bible school or seminary. In Japan, in particular, there is a serious shortage of evangelists, so if someone wants to be an evangelist, even if they are a little crazy, they are sent to Bible school, believing in "God's miraculous dealings", and then plunged into seminary. Schools are more enthusiastic about large numbers than small ones, and costs are cheaper. ・・・・・・ In order to appeal to foreign churches for donations, there is no better way than to have a large number of people. ・・・・ Moreover, our modern schooling is often academic-oriented and lacking in the development and training of practical skills. As already mentioned, schools are not suited to disciple-making.

Thus, a person is appointed to the 'ministry' without having been rigorously examined as to whether or not he is indeed an evangelist and pastor. I am ashamed to say that the school I graduated from was no exception. So 'fortunately' someone like me was able to graduate and become a missionary.

Moreover, those who become clergy in this way try to monopolise the work of the church by wielding the authority of the clergy. It is a tragedy. ・・・・・・ I have been a director of this tragedy for quite a long time. ・・・・

The various roles listed in the New Testament were not ordinations. Rather, they were practical works, and those who performed the function of an evangelist were called evangelists, and those who performed the function of a pastor were only called pastors. In other words, as they worked with the gifts they had been given, their work with those gifts was recognised by the whole church, and they were called pastors, evangelists, apostles or prophets. They did not have to prophesy as prophets because they were appointed to the office of prophet without the gift of prophecy, but by continuing to prophesy using the gift of prophecy given to them, even though they did not have the office of prophet, they were eventually recognised by the whole church and called prophets. . The office of prophet, together with the office of priest, was supposed to have been abolished with the completion of Christ's work. In the New Testament era, Paul and many other believers continued to function as priests, even though the office of priest was abolished because of the completion of Christ's redemptive work. Similarly, the office of prophet was abolished, but many fulfilled the function of prophet.

The term apostleship is so common that almost all biblical commentators and theologians say many things on the assumption that there was such a thing as an apostleship. So the ordinary pastor or evangelist also assumes that there was an apostleship. However, when the Bible is examined without such preconceptions, it is clear that the Bible is not talking about the apostleship, but the function of the apostles. In order to understand that the apostleship was established and that there was great authority in it, the problem is that the term 'apostle' was used in the New Testament rather vaguely, i.e. without definition, for various people. It is also a problem that no attention is given to the authority of the so-called 12 apostles, and, moreover, that James, who was not an apostle, is recorded as having done important work with considerable authority. When Paul defends his apostleship, he does not claim that he was called to be an apostle, but appeals to the apostolic character of the work he had done. He was an apostle not because he was an apostle and everything he did was apostolic work, but

because his work had a strong apostolic character.

However, in our present church, the office of pastor, with its many responsibilities attached, has been established first, and then someone is forced to apply himself to it. If the office is established, the work is agreed upon and someone does not fulfil the role, the church cannot stand, so even if someone is not very suitable for the role, we have to be patient and welcome him or her. Conversely, no matter how gifted a person is as a pastor, if he is already married and has a family, for example, it is an exceptional event for him to become a pastor because it is very difficult for him to receive a genuine parental education as a clergyman in Bible school or seminary. Without becoming a pastor, he is not given the opportunity to use his gifts as a pastor, because he cannot do the work prescribed for a pastor. If the gifts are not used, they rot. According to Christ's parable of the talents, they are taken away. That is why in our churches those who do not have gifts struggle to use the gifts they do not have, and those who have gifts struggle not to use the gifts they do have. It is difficult to wear the sleeves we don't have, but it is also difficult to keep the sleeves we do have hidden. Do you think such a church can powerfully fulfil its mission?

The work of a biblical church is not carried out by clergy, such as pastors and evangelists, according to prescribed duties, but by the whole congregation making the best use of their God-given gifts.

The pastor's work depends on how he makes the most of this treasure trove of gifts in front of him. It is a question of how to organise and make good use of these gifts, which are diverse, varied, in various stages of growth and development. If we leave the free use of the many gifts unchecked, we may end up losing sight of them. But if we suppress them, they may explode in frustration or rot and die. The most important thing is to search out and understand the gifts of each member of the congregation and to use them smoothly and effectively in the work of the church community, that is, in relation to the work of the gifts of other members of the congregation, so that the whole can work together in the best possible way and receive the best possible benefits. The most important work for pastoral evangelists today is to explore, sharpen and co-ordinate the gifts so that they can be activated.

Congregations create problems. Some congregations will unwittingly cause strife, driven by personal competitiveness, like Euodea and Sundtke, who were women leaders of the church in Philippi. Others would grow too tall and turn over. Some will be better at their jobs than the pastor, and his face and position may be jeopardised. There will be those who are more

absorbed in their own abilities or more serious about their own honour than the growth of the church as a whole, and this will cause headaches. Nevertheless, these are birth pangs. I am speaking now of the sorrow of not being able to give birth. The pains of childbirth are insignificant compared to the seriousness of the sorrow of not being able to give birth.

But these anticipated problems can also be avoided to a great extent if the congregation is well educated. In particular, when the church as the body of Christ is taught thoroughly enough to love and co-operate with each other, problems are less likely to arise, or if they do, they will not grow. Here, it may be necessary to warn you clearly. If you try what I am saying with our present prevailing view of the church, the individualistic view of the church imported from the West, you will surely fail. Even if individualism is not completely abandoned, it is absolutely impossible unless it is made 'smaller and smaller'.

One of the samurai signs of Western individualism is that competition is justified and glorified. In the USA, for example, this is thoroughly the case. From childhood, children are brought up in constant competition, taught, encouraged and coerced to excel above others. And when they do well, they are praised, celebrated and rewarded. They receive awards, medals and scholarships. Those with ability rise higher and higher. Over there, not only is the nail that sticks up not hammered down, but you are encouraged to go further and further.

On the other hand, education in the event of defeat also seems to be well organised. It is refreshing to see how well the Amerindians are able to 'lose', and I am constantly impressed by this. The attitude of the winners towards the losers is also admirable. In this respect, however, people in Asian countries, where individualism has never existed, have imported a lot of competition, but they have not yet been able to import a good attitude towards losing. The badness and ugliness of Asian people, including the Japanese, in losing, and the dirtiness and ugliness of the winners, is appalling. The winners cannot stand it without destroying the losers. The losers cannot resist taking a swing at the winners, no matter what it takes.

The Amerindians have been doing things in an optimistic way, assuming that Asians are fair people who are aware of the basics of individualism and democracy just like them, or that with a little education they will be fair. And when Asians have dealt with Americans in an Asian way, i.e. in a way that is not fair from an Amerindian perspective, they have been angry, resentful, saddened, agitated, lashing out and taking retaliatory action. Yes, there is something not fair about Asians ・・・・, but is that because I am Amerindian?

The sense of church and pastoral ministry born and nurtured in this Western culture is naturally different from the biblical one and does not conform to what I am trying to say now. They have brought a sense of competition into the church as well. Here in the Philippines, we are directly exposed to the influence of the US, as we were an American colony. Therefore, the harmful effects are direct. When the youth get together, they have Bible knowledge competitions, instrumental performance competitions, choral competitions, solo singing competitions. The winner goes to a regional competition, the winner there goes to a national competition, the winner there gets a scholarship to Bible college, free for four years. Those who are given the pastorate because of this are naturally competitive and have nothing to do with cooperation or strength. These people contest denominational elections for face value. They try to buy votes even by throwing dirty money around. This is a true story!　So they welcome the failures of their fellow pastors, who enhance their relative status and honour, and even plot to do so. They are my least favourite race. In the US, winning and losing are relatively neat. In Asia, it's ugly as hell.

This sense of competition is becoming stronger and stronger in Japan. It is also very prevalent in the church. Not only among the congregations, but also among the pastors. I wonder if there is anything that can be done about elections in the denomination. Because of that, there always seems to be a crack in the unity in the upper echelons of the denomination because of the friction and feuds that get in the way, but maybe it's because I'm so chauvinistic. They are all good people, but when it comes to elections, their weaknesses tend to show. The system is bad, as well as the spiritual growth of each individual.

Even though individualism had not developed in the country of Judea two thousand years ago, there was no end to conflicts rooted in things like face and pride, etc. The 12 disciples also made a lot of verbal fuss about who was the greatest among them, and were chastised by Christ every time they made a scene. So the early church, full of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, drew lots so that they could have an election and not have to cast a deciding vote. There's no hard feelings. I think the casting of lots was also wisdom for us as a people. As God's chosen people, was it God-given wisdom? They believed in God's interference rather than democratic principles, didn't they? If our cult adopted this, we would be much more peaceful. Or is it that in modern times there can be no divine interference? So, according to the laws of democracy, do we have to fight by vote to the end? ・・・・・ I have the comfort of that prickly little excitement of speaking ill of my own cult, peeling off a peeling scab. ・・・・・ But from what I hear, there are many other denominations that are much, much worse. ・・・・

The three Selfs that our organisation has actively embraced - voluntary economy, voluntary politics and voluntary evangelism - are not biblical concepts, even if they are basic missionary concepts that have been accepted throughout the world for the last 100 years and have been used to some effect. Rather, it is in direct opposition to biblical teaching. This teaching has contributed to the isolation of the church, the 'leave me alone' and 'don't care' attitude of pastors, and has contributed to the vice of privatisation of the church. In general, independent churches and monolithic churches, which sound respectable against the background of 'samurai don't eat', are rarely as unbiblical as this. It is a missionary application of the Western individualist idea, rooted in the Bible for a moment, that children are independent of their parents when they come of age, and has nothing to do with the biblical view of the church.

I hate to say it, but many of the founders of monolithic or independent churches were people who could not follow what others said. They are humble people who listen to God and obey him absolutely, but who do not like to listen to their brothers and sisters. Therefore, they choose to be monolithic or independent, which they can do as they please. Then, when their ministry grows a little, they become dictators. These people continue to fight ugly battles with each other, claiming that 'God said this'. ・・・・・ This is the story of the Philippines, and I would hope ・・・・・・ that such a thing is not possible in Japan.

So what about the biblical view of the church? The church is the body of Christ, of which you are a part. There is not competition but cooperation. Not independent but interdependent. It is not independent but interdependent.

Our churches must move away from the evil tradition of individualism and return to the biblical teaching of interdependence. This goes against the grain of modern society. The world today is individualistic and personalistic. But it is also clear that this individualism will doom the 'Spaceship Earth'. Nowadays, even in Western countries, a new concept of community is being explored. But that is not my concern. What I want to say is that the Church must recover a correct understanding of community.

Then there will be less individualistic thinking and action from the Church, and the faithful will grasp themselves as members of the community, with its responsibilities and roles. Instead of using the gifts entrusted to them for their own good, they seek to use them for the good of the whole church and for the glory of God. When they seek first the good of the church and the glory of God, and not their own good, honour or the praise of men, they can rejoice greatly even if they are brought low and others are exalted.

This changes even the basic relationships in the church. Each member of the church sees the value of his or her existence in being useful, helpful and beneficial to others. The pastor cares for each member of the congregation so that he or she can fulfil a function that is beneficial to the church as a whole. Pastors are no longer in competition with each other. The big, urban, rich churches naturally help the rural, poor churches. No, I don't even use the word help. We will 'send donations' with gratitude, understanding that without the small rural churches, it would have been difficult for the big urban churches to develop. The icebound churches of Hokkaido, the snowbound churches of Hokuriku, the churches on the outskirts of Shikoku, and the mountain churches of Kyushu are all important parts of us. They are the reason we have urban churches. They are doing work that the city churches cannot do. The pastors who work there are not 'incompetent and can only work in the countryside'. They are important people who dare to work in the difficult countryside and have gifts for rural work. Urban churches should be grateful and send donations. As far as I know, most urban churches have faithful members who were once saved and raised in the countryside and now live in the city. Urban churches would be justified in sending half of their tithes and offerings back to their rural church of origin.

The church lives with the awareness and realisation that we are all one. With the understanding that we all have gifts, we give thanks for the use of each other's gifts and rejoice when our gifts are used for the benefit of others. This should be adapted both on a denominational basis and internationally. It is a congregationalist error, poisoned by individualist democracy, to think that a denomination is merely an alliance of convenience of independent churches. The American organisations, which are the mother of our Order, have a strong tendency towards congregationalism because of the way they were founded, but fortunately the Japanese Order has not taken a congregationalist approach. However, the spiritual fact of unity exists even between congregationalist churches, and it is possible to practise that spiritual fact. Conversely, presbyterianism or overseerism does not necessarily mean a denomination that is immediately united.

In short, ministry through the function of gifts is work that is accomplished by recognising the value of individual gifts, drawing out the potential of each person and making the most of them. These gifts are given to the church as a community and should not be used for personal gain or pride. In particular, a sense of competition must be thoroughly avoided. This is why Paul had to write the letter to the Philippians. This is the warning. The key is humility. Those who have grown up in Japan, where community has not yet been completely lost, will

understand this, at least better than Westerners.

In order to promote ministry through the function of the gifts, a strong trust in the Church is necessary. Somehow we have become accustomed to seeing the Church as a flock of weak sheep that cannot live even a moment without a shepherd to take care of everything. The church is easy to wander and easy prey for the beast. That is why we must always have a pastor by our side. We have been somehow made to feel that we need him to guide us and protect us. The understanding that the church is a flock of weak sheep is of course correct. But we forget that the Church, on the other hand, is a powerful army of God, an ambassador of God's power and authority, which even the forces of the shadowy powers cannot overcome. In fact, the Bible speaks of the Church as an overwhelmingly strong army of God rather than as a weak sheep. There is no weakness in the expression 'the body of Christ'. Rather, it is full of strength, pushing forward the work of Christ.

The work of the pastor is then not the work of a weak and unreliable baby-sitter. It is like commanding an army, a group of heroic and fierce warriors. Moreover, he is not an officer holed up in the theatre of operations, but a sergeant who leaps head first into the front line to fight. They are resourceful, quick and active, depending on the situation and the capabilities of each soldier.

Sergeants are usually highly trained, battle-tested 'experts' or front-line 'experts', having been trained up from the rank of private in actual combat. They are not elites who graduated from military or naval academies. They are not good at discussing the affairs of the state under heaven, but when it comes to actual combat, even elite officers are no match for them. We need many such practical pastors in our churches. We need seminary-educated pastors who can knead and polish Greek and Hebrew, and workers with master's and doctoral degrees, but we need more and more battle-tested, hard-working pastors.

We should not underestimate the power of the church, i.e. the power of the congregation - people - people. It is an aspect of truth that the church is a weak sheep. It is also correct in the sense that it cannot live without its owner, God. But the Church is a powerful army that even the forces of the underworld cannot overcome. It is an army that continues to attack the world ruled by the devil with the power of the Kingdom of God. Let us look at the church as a powerful army. Let us look at each member of the congregation as a fierce soldier.

The work of the Church is not accomplished by a handful of people with special status,

position and education, but by all the gifts of all the members of the Church. This is another important aspect of the universal universality of the Church, which should never be neglected.

☆☆

Good grief, boredom is a thing of the world. I, who am never a man after my own heart when it comes to churches, have been writing up to this point, even though I'm a bit of a curmudgeon. It's a tough job. This is ・・・・. I can't even begin to admire myself, but it's a big deal. When I read it over again, I find it incoherent, unclear, chaotic and deviating from the point, and I haven't even said half of what I wanted to say. So, I managed to tame my feelings of almost giving up, and have worked hard to get this far. However, I am extremely annoyed by the people who read my articles. I am prepared to be scolded and told to "cut it out". So, in order for you to understand the argument to some extent, I thought I would give a rough outline of what I have done so far.

I.

For a start, the four "buts" of evangelism are advertised.

* Doing 'anytime evangelism'.

The first step is to promote the four "buts" of evangelism: * "Anywhere evangelism".

Evangelise anyone.

Evangelising 'anything'.

Four principles to complement the above.

Economic.

Ease of doing business.

Adaptability.

Reproductive. Reproductive, i.e. reproductive.

I was not strong enough to face the question head-on, so I turned instead to a more practical question: "What kind of church should we build? I was a bit too timid to face the question head on, so instead I turned to a more practical question: 'What kind of church should we build? And the church we should build ・・・・ is to embody the constancy of the universal church in the region ・・・・・・. The immutability of that universal Church is ・・・・・・

It is a community of people who have one thing in common. And that commonality is faith in and obedience to Christ as the living Saviour.

This community exists for a mission. And that mission, being concerned with God's

redemptive work, is nothing other than evangelisation.

That this community, as Christ's representatives, carries on Christ's mission. That we must not confuse mission with a way of life that comes from the nature of Christ.

That this community has four basic ministries that are easy to remember as WIFE. Namely: ・・・・・

Worship worship
Teaching instruction
Fellowship fellowship
Evangelism.

That it is through the function of the gifts that these four ministries are accomplished, and not through position, position or office.

・・・・・ and, well, I think I've written this out of the blue so far. And now, as the final part of the work of local realisation of the immutability of the universal Church, I would like to take up the impartation of power by the Holy Spirit.

'The imposition of power through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.'

We have just learned that the work of the Church is to be carried out through the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to the Church, that is, the people He has baptised into the Church and the abilities entrusted to them. The power of the Holy Spirit is what makes this gift more active, effective and powerful.

In the history of the Church, little attention was paid to the Holy Spirit and His work for a long time, until the 19th century, when the Holiness Movement in the USA and others brought about a strong interest in the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit, and in the second half of the 19th century the term 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' was frequently used in connection with the work of cleansing. Towards the end of the 19th century, interest shifted from the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a cleansing work, which was merely a subjective experience, to the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the impartation of power with biblical support, and among some people there was also a growing interest in tongues. At first they thought tongues was the ability to speak a new language, given for the preaching of the gospel, but soon realised their error and came to see tongues as a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, with the great inclination towards the baptism of the Holy

Spirit, the idea of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the imposition of missionary power and tongues as a sign accompanying that baptism took hold. It was on this understanding that the Assemblies of God, central to the Pentecostal movement, was born.

Until the Holiness movement of the 19th century, with few exceptions, the Holy Spirit had always been indulged in a minor role at best, and in most cases a forgotten presence. The Pentecostal movement brought the Holy Spirit to the foreground. It has brought him into a leading role in the Church. This is very important because it has turned our eyes from the historical Jesus Christ, who was active two thousand years ago, to the Spirit of Christ, who is alive today, who lives in and works through the Church. The Pentecostal movement did not bring the Holy Spirit out into the open, but the Holy Spirit moved the Church and caused the Pentecostal movement.

It must be noted that the theology of the traditional churches, including Reformed, Lutheran or Presbyterian, which was built at a time when there was very little interest in the Holy Spirit, has done little to learn about the Holy Spirit. The self-proclaimed Third Wave Movement has emerged, and some of these traditional churches are becoming more interested in the work of the Holy Spirit, but they are trying to combine their theology, which was built with little understanding of the Holy Spirit, with the new Pentecostal understanding of the Holy Spirit, so that it is as if they have grafted bamboo onto a tree. It is becoming like grafting a bamboo onto a tree. It is unclear what direction they are going to take. However, they also say that "God is still active through the Holy Spirit and through the Church. They share with us the understanding that Christ must be believed and worshipped not merely as the One who worked 2,000 years ago, but as the One who continues to work through the Holy Spirit and through the Church.

However, when they hear of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with tongues, there are many people, not only those in the traditional church, but even those in the charismatic and third wave movements, who say that it makes their hair stand on end. As a traditional Pentecostal, I too have had my hairs stand on end. I have already broken out in a bucketful of cold sweat at the words and actions of people, especially those who tend to be emotionally driven, concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit. So often they catch the baptism of the Holy Spirit cold and are allergic to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Also, the charismatic movement tends to emphasise various phenomena that have nothing to do with biblical teaching, and my frequent association with them has caused me to break

out in a new cold sweat. Some time ago, the vice-principal of the Philippine Military Academy, a military academy just around the corner, was saved at our Bible study. Excited, he used his position to hold an evangelistic meeting at this school. As the main lecturer, he brought with him a TV personality who was active in film and television at the time and who had been saved by the Charismatic Movement not long before. I was begged to attend. I had a bad feeling that the whole thing was too exciting.

The school is the Philippines' premier elite military academy, and the President is always present at the commencement and graduation ceremonies. Many of the country's generals and leaders have come from here. Many of those responsible for the recent coup attempt also came from here. All the cadets, probably around 700 of them, gathered in the gymnasium for a meeting. The lecturers told of their 'moving experiences' and then pressed them to make a decision to 'believe in Christ as Saviour', the so-called salvation decision. The Filipino elite, most of whom had a Catholic background and a 'beautiful morality' of not embarrassing the lecturer, raised their hands without exception. The lecturer, energised by this, went on to pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. No explanation, no nothing. I prepared myself, saying, 'Here it comes'.

My concern is that the charismatic movement is repeating the mistakes that Pentecostals have often fallen into for 70 years. One of their mistakes concerned the phenomenon of 'slain', literally translated as 'killed'. When we pray, somehow the people in front of us, believers and unbelievers alike, are bludgeoned to death. I, too, was a little embarrassed by this. If you pray 'badly' at a meeting, especially if you put your hands on the floor, they all fall down, flapping, limp and limp. People in the charismatic movement took special care of this phenomenon and even made it proof of the work of the Holy Spirit or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Herein lies the problem. Some evangelists played this on the TV channel and gained fame as spiritual giants.

A hairdresser's wife, who had been attending a Bible study for some time, did not show up for a short while. When we passed her on the street, we asked her about it and she said that she had stopped attending because she was worried that she might hit her head on the hard floor as she fell down whenever she was prayed for. Some evangelists were so full of physical power that they tried to force him down when they laid hands on him to pray, in an attempt to show that they had spiritual power.

Such was the reason for the preparation. The instructor expected everyone to fall over from

the start and, I forget how he put it, rearranged everyone to stand with their hands spaced apart like we do when we do radio exercises. The other cadets, who were cadets, lined up in a very tight line. Then the instructor prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Before the meeting, I made him understand, at least, that the falling phenomenon was not the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but I knew from experience that when it came to the actual meeting, he was already so excited that such understanding had disappeared somewhere. I had no choice but to earnestly join in the prayer, explain salvation one more time to each person, talk briefly about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and then pray. However, the whole gymnasium was filled with excitement, and one after another, cadet after cadet began to fall down, and it started to get out of control. It was all I could do to help them lie down, turning around and supporting them to keep them from slumping to the hard concrete floor. I looked over and saw that most of the candidates had already rolled over like caterpillars. But no one seemed to be speaking in tongues. From the next day onwards, I was plagued by a backache that was not opportune.

This was the beginning of a Bible study at the school. However, the reaction of the cadets to these evangelistic meetings was uniformly sceptical and negative. They acknowledged the fact that they had fallen, but seemed unable to accept that it was the work of God. Oddly enough, this is the same view as mine. I politely declined an invitation to a Bible study afterwards. I was working in a remote mountainous area where communist guerrillas were numerous, and where we successfully avoided running into each other. I was a missionary in direct conflict with their principles, and my name was apparently widely known among them, but they recognised my work in support of the poor population and tacitly approved of my roaming around their controlled areas. Therefore, if word got out that I was in and out of the military academy, I would not be able to enter the depths of these mountains, where I put most of my efforts.

The phenomenon of falling into a state of bladder frenzy or collapse may or may not be the genuine work of the Holy Spirit. However, it may very well not be so. It seems that a certain state of mind is created. Some people come because they want to fall down from the start. They seem to think that falling down is receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit, and they fall down because they want to be thought to have received the grace of the Holy Spirit. However, the true, biblical baptism of the Holy Spirit should not be denied because of this. When I hosted meetings or preached, I often took care that no one should fall down. I instructed them to listen to the biblical teachings I was speaking about, rather than falling down and making a fuss. Of course, I tolerated spontaneous falls. We who belong to the orthodox fellowship within the so-called Pentecostal movement must honestly acknowledge the confusion, errors,

mistakes and excesses of the movement's development. However, even if we did so, we could have a little more confidence in our theology.

For example, the theology of the Assemblies of God, to which I belong, is indeed moderate and orthodox. Its view of the Bible, its view of God, its view of the atonement and any other area is a very moderate orthodox faith. Furthermore, it is not too unreasonable in its biblical interpretation. There is no pressure to bring out their traditional golden rule theology and make people understand everything according to that theology, so there is no equating Israel with the Church, no equating baptism with circumcision, no infant baptism, etc. We don't have the eggshells of Catholicism stuck to our arse. It's dispensationalism, but it's also very, very moderate, and I've never met anyone who accepts what the Scofield Bible says as it is, and I've never met anyone who's carried this Bible around for the last 20 years. So I don't make a dispensational difference between the time when the New Testament was written and today, and I believe that things that happened in the time of the apostles can happen today. Nor do they claim instantaneous cleansing or second works of grace.

The attack on Brunner's Theology of the Holy Spirit, which was much talked about some time ago as a decisive blow against Pentecostal belief, is also somewhat off the mark, since ・・・・・ It also eschews extreme Calvinism, but appreciates the clarity of God's sovereignty - while recognising man's free will and responsibility for his sins.

I have believed the self-defeating common belief that the Pentecostal Church has no theology. And I have always felt somewhat, in this way, inferior to the traditional evangelical churches. But the truth is that we didn't really need 'our theology'. Of course, we have been more focused on practice than on theology, but the truth is that our theology does not have much to say, except about the Holy Spirit. If we take the theologies of other orthodox evangelical churches and put them together, eliminating their extremes, their somewhat unreasonable biblical interpretations and their seeming egocentricity, we end up with our theology.

This is not to say, however, that we have not had our own selfishness, or that we will not continue to do so in the future. The only advantage is that we have a less heavy theological tradition, which makes it easier for us to be honest with the Bible. This attitude of honesty towards the Bible is our most important heritage. We must make use of this heritage to develop a more biblical theology, a theology of the Holy Spirit, a theology of the church, a theology of mission and a theology of pastoral care based on biblical theology.

Recently, there has been a debate about destroying Pentecostal theology from the ground up, arguing that it is impossible to build a theology from historical books such as Acts because Pentecostal theology relies so heavily on Acts. This argument may continue for some time to come. However, if this argument is correct, then it would be impossible to argue theology from most of the Old Testament, and the only people who would seriously argue this would be those who hate Pentecostal theology or those who want to water down Pentecostal theology and compromise with other evangelicals. So the debate is unlikely to spread much or last very long.

Well, at any rate, the Pentecostal faith is now becoming mainstream Protestantism. A large part of the world mission today is carried out by those who belong to the Pentecostal faith. Some experts calculate that by the second millennium AD, Pentecostal Christians will make up the majority of Protestant Christians in the world. Thus, our understanding of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the impartation of power for evangelisation is empirically well established. And since sober biblical theology without preconceptions has been emphasised and promoted considerably, it is beginning to be recognised and accepted theologically.

However, it should be noted that Pentecostal believers can be overly emotional and place too much emphasis on supernatural phenomena. Nevertheless, it would be good to see a little more faith in supernatural phenomena raised in Japan. For example, healing of illness through prayer should be a greater evangelistic force. Or, against the so-called power of demons and evil spirits, people of Pentecostal faith should be able to deal with them in a unique way.

Speaking of which, just a couple of days ago, a pastor of a Baguio church said this. One of the lay evangelists had gone to a home Bible study and was waiting for the car he had arranged to take him to the hospital when a die-rocker (short for carpenter) stepped off and fell from a house he was building behind his house, breaking his leg. So, when the lay evangelist laid his hands on him and prayed, the deformed place rumbled and he was healed instantly. The congregational evangelist had experienced this only a few weeks earlier at another home meeting, when he laid hands on and prayed for a man with a fist-sized tumour on his back, which was clearly visible on his shirts, and the tumour disappeared while he was praying. 'Perhaps he received the gift of healing,' the pastor murmured at the end. The good news is that it is not the pastor who does such work, but the congregation.

Like many Asian, African and Latin American peoples, stories of so-called evil spirits and

ghosts abound among Filipinos, who basically rely on childish animistic beliefs. Generally speaking, Protestant churches, baptised in Western rationalism and natural science supremacy, do not take this up at all as an outdated and ridiculous superstition. In other words, they confront the issue by ignoring it. However, while some of these stories are mere fictions or empty tales of dreams and reality, quite a few, no matter how banal they may sound or how blatantly superstitious, are real events for the people concerned and have frightening power. It cannot be solved by ignoring it.

-The Catholic Church has solved this by successfully integrating it into the concept and events of the Church. That is why the Catholic Church in this country is full of ghost stories. It is not my observation, but the unanimous opinion of solid Catholic scholars in this country that the faith itself is essentially animistic and has 'only become Catholic in appearance'. In contrast, the churches of the Pentecostal faith have traditionally acknowledged the existence of demons and evil spirits and their real power, and have fought against them. They have gone a little too far and have even blamed the devil and demons for everything. I think it was a cartoon strip in Christianity Today magazine, some 25 years ago, in which the devil is complaining with tears in his eyes. 'Again, Pentecostal believers are blaming me for evil that I have no part in.'

But it is true that Pentecostal Christians have most boldly continued to fight these demons, and in my own limited experience I have had my fair share of fights with them. And there is no doubt that this quarrel, which some have named Power Encountering, has contributed greatly to the growth of Pentecostal churches around the world. The Holy Spirit is still working with 'signs and wonders' today.

As I was writing this far along, three locals came to visit me. One of them said that since December last year, he had suddenly become "possessed" and started speaking in another language. Since it sounded like Japanese, he decided that "the spirits of former Japanese soldiers must be trying to tell us where General Yamashita's hidden treasure is" and went around using body language and hand gestures, but in the end he could not find it. So, thinking it would be better to get help from the Japanese, he recorded the language of the other country for about an hour and brought it to me, along with his own.

The story of General Yamashita's hidden treasure is widely circulated in the Philippines. General Yamashita, who was called the Tiger of Malaya and praised for his bravery, later became commander-in-chief of the Japanese forces in the Philippines, but was cornered by

the overwhelmingly strong US forces and finally escaped to this mountainous area where I am now a missionary, where he was finally captured. He was eventually executed at the Montenrupa POW camp, but it is believed that before his capture he buried Japanese military treasure somewhere. Especially in the mountainous interior where he was captured, there is a deep-rooted popularity and obsession with the buried treasure, and it has been dug up here and there. I've been asked to 'help' a lot in the past, but none of it has been decent enough to make me want to help. Well, I had no choice but to listen to the tape recording, and I was somewhat surprised. It was not in Japanese, but it was different from the kind of imitation of tongues that accompanies the baptism of the Holy Spirit, in that it was spoken clearly, calmly and firmly. The vowels were so clear, with consonants of K, T, N, H, Y and W, plus the Japanese-like 'ra-go' consonants, the ones that are neither L nor R in English, that it seemed understandable that he could have been mistaken for Japanese; less CHA, CHU and CHO sounds would have made him more Japanese.

Anyway, I turned the conversation around and asked a lot of questions about the man's condition. He has been in a state of possession several times a day for about two months now, and each time he speaks these words and repeats them, he seems to have exhausted his energy and become physically and mentally completely overwhelmed. So I warn them that if they continue to try and get more out of this man, enthralled by the hidden treasure, he will eventually go insane and either destroy his life in search of the treasure, which he cannot be sure he will find, or give up the treasure and let the man recover. The man was made to realise that he had two choices: destroy his life in search of the treasure, which he did not know if he would find, or give up the treasure and let the man get back on his feet. Fortunately, he and the other two gave up the treasure.

I contacted a pastor of a Baguio church who spoke the local language and took them for more detailed counselling. After the counselling, the pastor ordered the evil spirit possessing the man to leave in the name of Jesus Christ. The man was in a normal state at this time, so the immediate result was unknown. Perhaps we will have to wait and see for a while after this. But what I want to say now is not what the outcome was, but the fact that there are many such cases in this country, and even in Japan they are not uncommon. This was true in the time of Cillis and in the time of Paul.

Evangelism is essentially, intrinsically and fundamentally a work of God. It has its origins in God, is founded by Christ and is practised by the Holy Spirit. Man is merely used by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives man to the Church as a gift, and He adds to his gifts as

abilities, and then He works constantly to make those gifts more powerful and effective.

It is natural that we should make effective use of our natural abilities and the abilities we have acquired through education and training to evangelise. However, we must not forget our trust in the Holy Spirit and our faith in His direct intervention. I am a very unspiritual person, so I am not interested in saying that we should give up our human powers and rely solely on the Holy Spirit. Unlike respectable spiritual ministers, we cannot find such a teaching in the Bible. We should exert our human powers to the utmost. But no matter how good our abilities are, we should pray and expect the direct action of the Holy Spirit on top of them, recognising that they are God's through redemption or imparted by the Holy Spirit.

For some reason, supernatural phenomena, such as so-called miracles and healings, do not occur very often in Japan. It is not that Japanese Christians lack faith. It seems to be a difference in the way God deals with them. In the Philippines, people were healed when I prayed, while in Japan, even if Oral Roberts or T.L. Osborn prayed, not much work was done. So in Japan we tend to be timid and imitate churches that do not have 'superstitious beliefs', such as praying for the sick. But we should appeal to God and keep praying.

Let's get back to the main point. The Holy Spirit not only gives gifts to the church, but also empowers it to use those gifts more effectively, efficiently and powerfully. And the Bible teaches that this impartation of power by the Holy Spirit is also a gift. However, this is of a slightly different nature from the gifts we have been dealing with. The first is the impartation of various abilities, and the second is the impartation of power to use those abilities better. And the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the greatest of these impartations of power.

I do not believe that the impartation of power is entirely due to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, i.e. that without the baptism of the Holy Spirit there is no power at all. This is because the Bible does not say so. Nevertheless, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the climax of the imposition of power. This gives the Christian the most mighty and holy power. This does not mean that those who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit become psychic. They become able to use the abilities they have already received more powerfully. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are many people who have neither received the baptism of the Holy Spirit nor believe in it who are doing greater work than those who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, by being fully aware of the abilities they have been given and using them effectively. But it is an undeniable fact, and history proves it, that on the whole, churches that believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and emphasise its power are doing more powerful

missionary work.

And the baptism of the Holy Spirit is said to make Christians bolder. This can be inferred by the Acts article and can be demonstrated by many experiences. This power, however, is not a panacea, nor does it have a permanent effect. Peter, the coward who denied Christ, did not merely see the resurrection, but experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which enabled him to boldly respond to his persecutors in that same place where he had once denied Christ. And yet, after a while, he reverted back to being a coward, compromising with the Judaists and so on, and was rebuked by Paul, who was, of course, a junior member of the church.

There may be people in the world who have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit but are much bolder than those who have. But that does not negate the validity and necessity of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not originally intended to make Christians holy, but to make them bold. This is a major difference from the thinking of those who have taken over the Holiness Movement of the 19th century. As mentioned earlier, the Holiness movement was the mother of the Pentecostal movement, which understood the baptism of the Holy Spirit as an instantaneous cleansing, a second work of grace following conversion, but Pentecostals have pushed this understanding a little further by reexamining it biblically, and have actually argued that it is not a cleansing by nature but an experience of power. Pentecostals have pushed that understanding a little further by examining it a little more biblically, and have discovered that it is not really about cleansing, but about power. In particular, our group also went one step further and dismissed instantaneous cleansing as unbiblical and did not eschew the theology of a second work of grace. However, it does seem to be true that the baptism of the Holy Spirit can result, or be incidental, in cleansing. The fiery flames that accompanied the Pentecostal event may symbolise cleansing.

Nevertheless, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is still essentially about power. Many strong evangelists are in the group known as Pentecostalism. And there is no shortage of strong evangelists in Pentecostal groups who disappear due to moral failure. If they are only made bold, and if cleansing is not very advanced, will they become bold in evil? Somehow, this reminds me of Samson in the Old Testament, which must be much, much, much reflected on.

Anyway, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is only one of many ministries of the Holy Spirit and cannot even be called the most important one. However, it is very important in mission or evangelisation, i.e. for the fulfilment of the purpose of the Church's existence and mission, and must never be neglected. However, even in missionary or evangelistic work, baptism is not the only work of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is only one and the most

specific way in which the Holy Spirit empowers the Church. And this, according to Peter's words, is a gift promised to the Church in all regions in all ages (Acts 2:38-39), and there is no way to ignore it. We should go boldly claiming this for all non-Pentecostal churches. For it is not the claim of our churches, but the teaching of the Bible.

All churches in all ages should honestly crown this promised gift. But that is not the only way to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not that we cannot mission at all without it. But if the church does not receive the power of the Holy Spirit at all, it will not be able to evangelise. The church's mission and evangelisation is entirely and solely dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit.

But somehow I think ・・・・・ somehow is also important ・・・・・・・・. It's a kind of intuitive reception of danger signals. ・・・・・ Recently, there seems to be an emphasis again on mission that is not by the Holy Spirit, or that replaces the power of the Holy Spirit. Making church buildings nice and beautiful and attractive, making the content of the meetings more showy and pandering to the world, and, yes, even putting too much emphasis on education and flattering and astonishing people by saying, 'I'm from America, Germany, England, it's D.D., D.Th., DDT', etc., etc., etc., etc. It's one of them.

Fortunately or unfortunately, in modern times, the world mission of the American church has overwhelmingly surpassed that of the churches in other countries. Moreover, after the Second World War, Ameri-culture swept the world, again through overwhelming national power. For better or worse, we have been baptised into the Amerindian culture in almost every field. Many of the so-called Christian peoples have been baptised into the Amerindian culture twice over.

It may seem insignificant, but the Amerindians, who were largely lower class immigrants, have lost the old traditional cultural trappings of knighthood. With few exceptions, family names were also ignored. However, human beings want to stand out from others in some way. The quickest way to do this was to become rich and to acquire a high level of education. Therefore, competition based purely on individual ability, without regard to family origin or ancestry, was glorified as 'fair', and the rich and the learned came to be respected. Incidentally, it is interesting to compare the same book published in the UK with one published by an American publisher. Authors of books published by American publishers always have a D.Th., D.D. or Ph.D. degree attached to their name. In the UK, however, it is just a name. So many of the world churches under the influence of American Christianity share this characterisation.

Worse still, the Pentecostal Church has a short history. Our parent organisation, the Assemblies of God in the USA, was founded in 1914, so it is only 75 years old. The young history means that the majority of the congregation still belongs to the so-called lower classes. It is easy to see from a study of Christian history that the early congregations of groups that arose from some kind of spiritual awakening were, without exception, from the lower classes. As a result of a decent Christian life, they would improve financially and socially, joining the middle class and reaching as far as the upper class.

So our organisation as a whole is now trying very hard to run uphill. There is an unspoken emphasis on education, and a lot of talk about degrees. There is little public pampering of the rich, because of the ・・・・・・ biblical warnings against riches, but ・・・・・ the latent envy is very strong. Those who flock to that stench of material civilisation, this-worldly-interests-rights, 'prosperity gospel' are, sadly, most numerous amongst my people.

As a result, the Christians of the Pentecostal churches in the Philippines, who have suffered the full brunt of the US influence, have decisively inherited that weakness and are just trying to get a degree in a hunch. Organisations, too, struggle to build schools that can somehow produce higher degrees, actively trying to compete with other long-established denominations. The emphasis on education is not in itself a bad thing. However, when the emphasis is on degrees, a funny thing happens. And if education replaces devotion, and the degree becomes a proxy for the power of the Holy Spirit, then we are screwed. Neighbouring South Korea, which is under the strong influence of American civilisation, is also an extremely educated society, with a strong envy of degrees. It is common to see four degrees on a pastor's business card. The disease is about to hit Japan.

Thomas Aquinas once said that the Pope of the time told him that "we no longer need to say 'gold and silver are not for me'", to which he replied, "I have no need to say 'gold and silver are not for me'".
We no longer need to say 'No gold and silver for me'," he lamented, "nor 'Stand and walk in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene'.
He lamented that "we no longer have to say 'No more gold and silver for me'". Today we are no longer 'unlearned men'. We are no longer 'uneducated men' and we are no longer 'men who can testify boldly and without fear before anyone'.

When I see the students of our Bible schools and seminaries, who spare no time for prayer

and research, sacrifice their time to attend Sunday services, and are busy writing their reports, I am reminded that they are relying more on their studies than on the Holy Spirit.

We should realise that missionary work and evangelism are entirely dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit, and we should ask for help from the Holy Spirit. We should start everything by praying and asking for the power of the Holy Spirit. But it is not enough. We should proceed with our work while believing and expecting the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit. But even then it is still not enough. You should work, repeating and chewing over the basic fact that you are only being used by the Holy Spirit, more than you need the power of the Holy Spirit to do your work. In all your activities, you should put the will of the Holy Spirit first and go about killing yourself.

The church has many forms, traditions and ways of doing things. To a large extent, it is up to individual churches to decide what form they take and how they do things. However, evangelising by the power of the Holy Spirit is a MUST and a MUST. It is not to evangelise without the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the unchanging principle of the Universal Church. We must not bend this immutable principle when we try to make this Universal Church express itself in a certain area.

One time we were visiting a village in the deepest part of the Philippine mountains. We had already been walking for hours every day for about a month along steep roads that horses could not pass, meeting in village after village, and spending sleepless nights attacked by bedbugs, and we were completely exhausted. With aching feet and legs, I slid and fell down a steep slope to the young man's house in desperation. The young man was lying in his clothes in a dark hut without a single window. He said he had not been able to eat for a long time. The village girl who had accompanied him explained that he had forced himself to go to town and had been to five different hospitals, but they did not know the cause of his illness and could not treat him. It would take a healthy man 10 hours on foot to get to the nearest small hospital. The next hospital, which has electrical equipment, requires another three hours and a bus ride over bumpy roads.

With the congregational evangelist who has responsibility for this area, I laid my hands on him and prayed. As we prayed, our expectations grew. I felt excited that God would heal and raise this young man up at any moment, and I continued to pray with my eyes open. But no miracle happened on the spot. So, for the rest of the day and all night, he was excited and restless. The next morning, he was still lying in bed. I left for my next destination,

somewhat regretfully.

A few months later, I visited the village again. I saw the young man who had carried a large pig on his shoulders up a steep hill for a fellowship meeting, and who, without resting, had handled it with great dexterity and prepared the meal quickly and efficiently. In this mountainous area, it is the role of men to cook at such times. Now he has a faint crush on a woman who works as a lay evangelist, and he is trying very hard to win her favour, to the point of smiling.

We should be excited by the Holy Spirit's work and direct interference in everything we do.

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Now, there was a gap of exactly two years between finishing the previous line and starting this one. It is not that I was slacking off. I was just so busy with my day job that I didn't have a chance to face the word processor. During the long dry season, I worked up a good deal of sweat doing outside work, and now that the rainy season has finally arrived, I'm very happy. Just as I was planning to play around with my word processor, I had to leave the country temporarily due to an unexpected event. On top of that, a major earthquake hit the area where I work, killing over 1,500 people and severely damaging our work. I was rushing back and forth between Japan and the Philippines, taking nothing for myself but rushing around, doing relief work and reconstruction work. And then, after we had managed to get through all that, a big change happened to us, and we had to say goodbye to our long life abroad and live in our country of origin. My home country is the Japan of more than 20 years ago, not the Japan of today. I must be a foreigner now. For a while I will have to work hard to become a modern Japanese.

But I'm a lazy person and I'm trying to cheat by using a word processor. I have a convenient cause in my head: in order to become a modern Japanese, I must be able to type on a word processor. However, this word processor gave me a lot of trouble. Perhaps it was the form that had become old, perhaps the creator had not thought enough of it, or perhaps it was my fault for bringing it to the Philippines, a country with thoroughly poor electrical conditions, but every time there was a power failure, the text I had put my heart and soul into typing would be wiped clean. Even the minutes I had put in a file were stirred up into a mess,

More than once, it even rendered me utterly useless. The incoherence in this booklet is solely due to WorPro. ・・・・・・ good, now I have an excuse.

Today I'm going to start preparing for the move. My family is already back in Japan. I may have to put away my word processor and write the rest of the story in Japan. Or, if I finish cleaning up quickly, I will have plenty of time to work on my word processor.

Practical part

Well, well, well, that's enough of my nonsense, let's get down to business. So far, I've focused more on the theoretical side of things, but from now on, I'd like to focus on the practical side.

Pioneering evangelism.

First of all, how do we actually start evangelising? Evangelism here refers to the work of evangelism with the clear purpose of building local churches as a local expression or manifestation of the universal church, and not to evangelism to the extent of handing a tramcar to someone on the train. In other words, it is pioneering evangelism. How should pioneering evangelism begin?

Of course, there are conditions. There is a complex interplay of conditions on the part of the evangelisers: age, finances, ability, knowledge, connections, resources, faith, whether they are male or female, single or with a family, whether they have a partner or not, and on the part of the target or recipient of the mission: the size of the community, social position of the people living there, economy, studies, cultural background, religious views, etc. There is no one pioneering evangelistic method that is right for this.

Nevertheless, some things can be said. At least one thing can be said. That is, we must not repeat the way the Japanese church has been doing things up to now. To be clear, the Japanese church has failed in its mission in Japan. Not only evangelists who have been evangelising for 30 or 40 years, but also those who have been doing it for 10 or 20 years must clearly confess: "Our mission has failed. Our mission has been a failure. We must humbly acknowledge our failures and warn young evangelists who try to imitate them. 'Do not repeat the same mistakes

we made.' We must not let them fear failure. But do not let them repeat our mistakes. Let them do what we could not do. Let them try boldly to do what we could not think of, what we could not conceive of. If they fail, that failure is a treasure. But if they repeat the same things we have tried many times without success, and fail in the same way, their failure is nothing more than a speck of dust.

Therefore, the pioneer evangelism method I am proposing is not the best method and may not be as good as the traditional method. However, it is different and therefore worth a try. Now ・・・・・ No, wait. I am sure there are many of you who are somewhat angry that I am universally declaring that the mission of the Japanese church has been a failure, and am urging experienced and faithful servants of the evangelists to admit and confess their failure. You must be saying, "There are pastors of churches with more than 200 worshipers and churches with 700 members." Well, that is certainly true. Thankfully, there are not a small number of such superstar pastors in Japan, and even though I have nothing to do with them, I often hear people say, "Oh, I know that church very well. In fact, the pastor of that church is my ・・・・ ", as if they were on intimate terms with each other.

This is where this eightfold evangelism theory came to an abrupt end. This was because Floppy went missing when I returned to Japan. I had a print-out of the rough draft, but I had lost the energy to retype it, had completely forgotten about it and couldn't even remember where I had put it. But just recently, I discovered the printout after my cat had a rough encounter with it. And with the help of a handy modern device called a scanner, I was able to put the old text into print, albeit imperfectly.

As you can see, this was written some 20 years ago, when I was a missionary in the Philippines. It is not without some points that may already be considered outdated. For example, the assertion that evangelists, not pastors, are needed for evangelism in Japan needs to be rephrased. Nowadays, Japan's population is ageing and the number of pastors is rapidly decreasing, and it is expected that many churches will be left without pastors. We must produce a large number of pastors at all costs. But even so, Japan remains fundamentally a mission field. What is needed is evangelism. It is not pastoral care. That is why, in terms of content, we think there is still something profitable to be done, and we present it to you.

20 January 2009.

*** Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version) ***